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ABSTRACT

The two issues of the journal SKOLE for 1993 contain original articles and reprints about small alternative schools, home schooling, school as community and community as school, racial and class inequalities in public schooling, and various educational philosophies and innovations. Major articles include: (1) "School As Community: Memories" (Mario Jordana); (2) "Inside Shaker Mountain School: Democratic School Governance" (Jerry Mintz); (3) "Learning from My Mother, Learning from My Daughters" (Kate Kerman); (4) "Home Schooling: A Personal Experience" (Hannah Lapp); (5) "Community As School: Afterthought" (about the Leonard Peltier case) (Larry Becker); (6) "Dimensions of Community, The Seed Bed of Civilization" (Ernest Morgan); (7) "Convince To Conquer" (speech about overpopulation to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) (Jacques Cousteau); (8) "Tribal Wisdom" (excerpt from "Millennium") (David Maybury-Lewis); (9) "Greens and Libertarians: The Yin and Yang of Our Political Future" (Dan Sullivan); (10) "The Streets Take a Son" (Linda Yglesias); (11) "Two Schools" (Kevin Powell); (12) "Reform, Choice and the Teachers' Unions" (Carlos Bonilla); (13) "Schooling As if Children Mattered: Thirty-five Years on East Hill" (Jonathan Bliss); (14) "Arthur Morgan School As an Educational Model" (Jeff Goldman); (15) "Kohl Open School in Forefront of Education Revolution" (Dana Nichols); (16) "Intimacy, Connectedness, and Education" (Emanuel Pariser); (17) "Homer Lane and Self-Government" (John Potter); (18) "Child Rearing and Learning for 'The Real World'" (Joel Weber); (19) "Building Community in a Pluralistic Society" (Mary Leue); (20) "Henry George and the Reconstruction of Capitalism" (Robert V. Andelson); (21) "The Female Planet" (Eve Ilsen); and (22) "Spirituality As a Factor in Educational Theory" (William H. Leue). The journals also contain poems, student writings, book reviews, an interview with Jonathan Kozol, letters to the editor (including a lengthy letter/essay about "teacher formation" by John Taylor Gatto), and announcements of books and videos. (SV)

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the Journal of Alternative Education

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EDITORIAL COMMENT:

In this issue, we continue to explore the ramifications of the issue we have stressed so often in previous issues - the question of all questions, as we see it - what indeed is it which makes it so hard to see beyond our own individual perspectives to the global one of the nature of life on earth and what we - yes, you, me, each of us! - is doing to make it impossible for us to learn how to live in this miraculous habitat of ours with reverence for its life, moderation in our personal needs and wants, joy and satisfaction in the small miracles of everyday immediacy, pleasure in being parents and passing on to our children the sense of humanness - stewardship - which is so essential for the continuation of life on earth?

Why do we always seem to see the problem *out there*, when abundant evidence of its ubiquity, its ever-presence, is to patent to anyone who chooses to see it? It exists in our own families, our neighborhoods, our institutions - not just in the rain forests of Central America and the sun-baked plains of India! Our own personal inhumanity of man to man is not a vague generalization that applies to black people or to Southern red-necks (choose your prejudice!) or to men who molest or beat their wives and/or children.

The beauty of this fact - the fact that we are all part of the problem - is that it puts each of us in the drivers seat for devising solutions to it! None of us has the answer - but each of us has his/her own tiny piece, and each of us can find out where it fits if s/he cares enough to search. It is time we began pouring our creative energies into that endeavor instead of wasting it carping at the other fellow!

There is even a how-to we can get hold of in order to make a beginning. Following the image I used above of being in the drivers seat brings me to Gurdjieff's image of the horse, the cart and the driver which I used in a previous issue of **ΣΚΟΛΕ** as a model of human life which allows us to penetrate the nature of immediate reality without resorting to the more historically traditional models which have been so divisive - Judaism, Christianity, Islam - perhaps because they were based on moral rules of living in the 'world out there' far more than accepting the real nature of the 'world' we each carry around inside ourselves. And the truth is that we are, each of us, 'the enemy' - the enemy of change.

Gurdjieff says we are like a driver who sits on a cart pulled pulled by a horse. This assemblage is moving down a street, on its way to deliver the goods in the cart. The driver habitually thinks of himself as the essential ingredient of this triple team - driver, horse and cart - that since he is the one who is in charge of moving this triple assemblage from its source point to its goal, his perspective is reality, since it 'works' for him in terms of this limited objective. But that doesn't make his point of view a full representation of reality. And because of the limited nature of his model, it reduces his 'world' to a single-dimensional reality and blinds him to the truth about it. Actually, says Gurdjieff, we are all three - driver, horse and cart. But he says it far better than I ever could: LISTEN!

Inside us we have a horse; it obeys orders from outside. And our mind is too weak to do anything inside. Even if the mind gives the order to stop, nothing will stop inside. We educate nothing but our mind. We know how to behave with such and such. "Goodbye." "How do you do?" But it is only the driver who knows this. Sitting on his box he has read about it. But the horse has no education whatever. It has not even been taught the alphabet, it knows no languages, it never went to school. The horse was also capable of being taught, but we forgot all about it.... And so it grew up a neglected orphan. It only knows two words: right and left.

What I said about inner change refers only to the need of change in the horse. If the horse changes, we can change even externally. If the horse does not change, everything will remain the same, no matter how long we study. (emphasis mine)

It is easy to decide to change sitting quietly in your room. But as soon as you meet someone, the horse kicks. Inside us we have a horse.

The horse must change.

If anyone thinks that self-study will help and he will be able to change, he is greatly mistaken. Even if he reads all the books, studies for a hundred years, masters all knowledge, all mysteries - nothing will come of it. Because all this knowledge will belong to the driver. And he, even if he knows, cannot drag the cart without the horse - it is too heavy.

First of all you must realize that you are not you. Be sure of that, believe me. (emphasis mine) You are the horse, and if you wish to start working, the horse must be taught a language in which you can talk to it, tell it what you know and prove to it the necessity of, say, changing its disposition. If you succeed in this, then, with your help, the horse too will begin to learn.

But change is possible only inside. (emphasis mine)

AS TO THE CART, its existence was completely forgotten. Yet it is also a part, and an important part, of the team. It has its own life, which is the basis of our life. It has its own psychology. It also thinks, is hungry, has desires, takes part in the common work. It too should have been educated, sent to school, but neither the parents nor

> anyone else cared. Only the driver was taught. He knows languages, know where such and such a street is. But he cannot drive there alone.
>
> Originally our cart was built for an ordinary town; all the mechanical parts were designed to suit the road. The cart has many small wheels. The idea was that the unevennesses of the road would distribute the lubricating oil evenly and thus oil them. But all this was calculated for a certain town where the roads are not too smooth. Now the town has changed, but the make of the cart has remained the same. It was made to cart luggage, but now it carries passengers. And it always drives along one and the same street, the "Broadway." Some parts got rusty from long disuse. If, at times, it needs to drive along a different street, it seldom escapes a breakdown and a more or less serious overhaul afterwards. Badly or well, it can still work on the "Broadway," but for another street it must first be altered....

Looking at models of reality as means of beginning to live together on the planet, it can be very enlightening to discover the nature of what one might call the term 'implicate ('folded' or non-explicate) universe' or the hidden world of the spiritual - or even the psychological concept of 'the unconscious,' to use a Freudian model. This is what Gurdjieff is saying. For every exoteric religion there is an esoteric or mystical 'wing' which draws on this inner world for its source of understanding about the nature of reality. And there are many 'ways' or 'paths' into that inner world. It is not necessary to travel to India in search of a guru when the answers all lie within. It is enough to begin looking at the intolerance with which one views people whose views differ in some respects from one's own. As Stephen Levine says,'The way to get it together is together!' The process involves accepting the finite nature of both our world and ourselves! That is the first step. Most people don't even take it! They think the driver is the only one involved in doing the work of making change, of getting the job done. It's not.

The inner work is an essential element in becoming what Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi calls Meshiach - the Messiah - the One needed for the world to come into its own. And, as Zalman sees so clearly, we are, each of us, Meshiach! Jesus isn't go-ing to do that work for us! We've got to become him and do it ourselves! Pogo time! It's up to us bozos now! No, not *instead* of working out in the world, but as an essential and inextricable concomitant!

As a constant reminder, we need to say over and over to ourselves, "Yes, Virginia, there is an ending!" Americans seem to find the notion of endings, of death, of failure, of loss, of irreversability, very hard to accept. For an adult, believing in endings seems as hard as believing in Santa - in reverse! We need to *dis*-believe in the "Santa Claus" of an unlimited planetary resource! We act as though thinking about such things is a real no-no. Hey, it needn't be. Dying can come as a relief, just as madness can be a refuge. Accepting the reality of limitation can set you free to start right back at the beginning, where your *real* education left off! To counter the poison of the infantile illusion we all share of our own immortality, omniscience and omnipotence, I propose an antidote: read the speech given by the Captain at the Rio earth conference! Read it prayerfully! He spells out clearly the lesson we all need to learn. He tells us that Easter Island and Haiti are early warnings of irreversible ecological disaster, like the canaries miners keep in the mines for early warning of lethal gas. He says that the population explosion is our doom, and that population pressure comes from the unequal status of women. Women and children - the institutions that affect them most damagingly are the ones that require reform - birth, school, health. But first, we must learn the lesson of who we are on the inside. We must become self-healing physicians. Only then can we create miracles for the healing of the earth - and it *is* miracles we need! Lots of them, big and small!

So engrave the Captain's words on your hearts in words of fire! Tell yourselves - over and over and over! -

WE HAVE THIRTY YEARS TO STRAIGHTEN OUT THIS MESS!

We must educate the horse! Let us begin.

SCHOOL AS COMMUNITY:

MEMORIES

by Mario Jordana

Francisco Ferrer y Guardia (1859-1909) was born in Alella (Barna). He was an educator and Spanish revolutionist of anarchist ideas. As a young man he worked in business and as a railroad inspector. When he was twenty five years old, he joined the Masonic Lodge 'Verdad' (Truth), took part in a republican uprising led by General Villacampa, migrated to Paris, worked as Ruiz Zorilla's secretary, and later became a teacher in Paris. In 1901 he inherited an estate from Ernestine Meunier, one of his pupils in Paris, and that same year founded the 'Modern School' in Barcelona.

This move brought difficulties for him. In 1906 he was accused and acquitted of participating in the attempt on the life of King Alfonso XIII in Paris and in Madrid. In 1909, however, he was condemned to death on the (false) accusation of being responsible for the 'Tragic Week' in Barcelona and he was shot at Montjuich.

In the year 1932-1933 when my whole family moved to the neighborhood of Clot in Barcelona, we immediately registered in the school—known as the 'Nature' School. The 'Nature' School was located on Municipal Street above the Textile Workers Union (CNT). The school was directed by Professor Juan Puig Elias together with his comrade, Senora Roca. His daughter Libertad was also a teacher in the school.

As a disciple of Ferrer y Guardia, Juan Puig Elias' method of teaching was that of the Modern School. The activities of the 'Nature' School were, therefore, different from all the other schools in Clot and Barcelona. A child coming from another school immediately recognized the difference from other schools that he/she had attended.

It was an educational revolution to change everything in the schools as was done in the Modern School. For one thing, it was the only school in which boys and girls attended classes together, from the youngest to the oldest. Boys and girls shared the same classes, according to age. They went to school happy each day that they learned something new. They literally breathed their desire to learn at school.

They did not know of physical or moral punishments. In the Modern School if something happened that required chastisement, it was done with an oral reprimand understood only by the transgressor (since no one was ever named). It was a lesson that no one forgot.

The Modern School taught children to be free, to love their fellow beings, not to harm nature or mistreat animals—in other words, to love life. They were taught to respect older people. We learned to ask an older person with more experience in life to teach us what we do not understand because we are so young. Out of respect for older people, we were taught that we should do what we can in the street and in public transportation by giving them a seat or our hand for support.

Teaching for whatever age grew gradually from year to year. No teacher had a class of more than 15 children. This assured that every student achieved understanding sooner or later of the subject matter. No one moved on to another subject until all members of the group mastered the subject being studied—the natural sciences, mathematics or whatever. All the children in the group read a paragraph. Then, one by one, they talked about what they had read, with the book closed. In this way, what they read became engraved in their minds. Each child also kept a diary which was treasured more each day, shaping it into a book to be read another day as a memoir of what had been learned or had happened. (What wouldn't I give to have that diary!) Like all games, the studies were suggestive. The children did not tire of participating. They loved to learn.

The teachers at the 'Nature' School were advanced. At that time, no primary or secondary school had a human skeleton but the first thing that a visitor to a classroom saw was a human skeleton. Every child in the older group knew the name of all the bones in the body. Many visitors were surprised to find that the pupils had learned to read and understand the human skeleton. (It was a pleasure to be able to answer the teacher's questions for our visitors.) In addition, there were identical copies of our body, made in synthetic materials, separated from the body and in the proper colors that could be opened at the chest, for example, to look inside the body and locate vital organs, such as the heart, the lungs, or the liver. In turn, these opened up so they could be studied in greater detail showing the veins, the sections, and so forth. There was also physical and chemical equipment, as well as for astronomy. All of the apparatus was studied. A student of the oldest group was prepared to go to the university. Let us remember that many went on to be teachers.

Almost every Thursday, we had an excursion, sometimes to the mountains, sometimes visits to the museums. There was explanation and comment on what we saw as we walked along. In the mountains there might be discussion of a point a student might raise, or an explanation by the teacher of plants, flowers, insects, trees, and so on. Above all, the teacher would tell us things we should avoid doing, such as killing animals or bringing harm to the mountain by burning trash on the mountainside. The teaching was both visual and tactile.

Lunch or a picnic in the mountain was followed by children's games. The return to school was joyful—singing songs. The excursions were always hikes; it was our good luck that there were no cars then—invading everything, contaminating the roadways. Who does not remember the streams of pure crystalline water that satisfied our thirst? That will never come back any more!

Every year at the end of the school course, dramatic presentations and dances were preformed in the theatres in Barcelona and neighboring towns for the benefit of the Colonies —communities in the country that provided for summertime vacations (I was a comic actor many times.) Going to the Colonies meant that a group of boys and girls would spend the month of August in the Pyrenees staying in a country house located in the town of Ribas de Fresser, high in the mountain. The boys and

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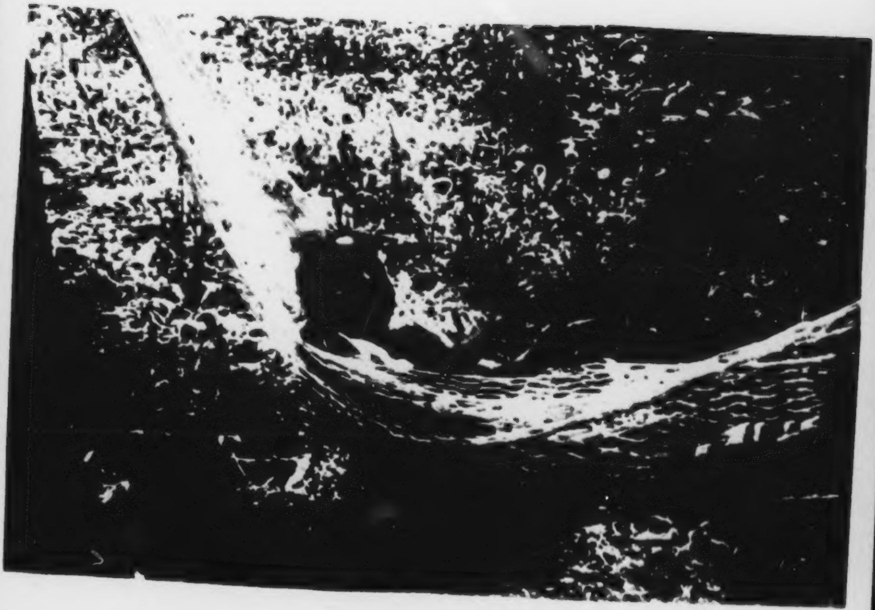

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girls lived there with some of the teachers. There was a large open space in front of the house where the children played without fear of hurting themselves. They could play all types of games in the fresh air. They also arranged entertainments such as dances and poetry functions when their parents came to visit them. Excursions were organized to look for mushrooms, strawberries, and wood or to bathe in the river. There was always something to do—long hikes, two day trips, going up Puig-Mal (the highest mountain in Catalonia, El Tagamanen). We went to the Valley of Nuria, entered France. How marvelous when one stops to think of all we experienced in our childhood!

Public functions were organized in Ribas de Fresser, one of which was bound to be on the theme "Fight Against War." Programs were performed in Puigcerda where the people received us with love in their homes, giving us their best desserts. How happy we were! The Modern School was doing well and it left its imprint on the people. What did they call the house where we stayed ? They called it "Mon Nou," Catalan for "New World." The lettering at the entrance to the estate was painted and repainted each year by the children. Every letter had a special meaning—for example, the letter M was a boy or girl, the O was the World.

We would look at the clear brilliant sky after supper and have lessons in astronomy. The North Star, the Milky Way—how beautiful it all seemed to us little ones! We had many stories and memories from that period of our lives. And many were recorded in our diaries.

Let us not forget that before we started our vacation the end of the course was celebrated. This was a time of great joy for the students. The best work of the students was put on display in the great hall, their best writings, their best works of art, their best manual work, and so on. The school was visited by many hundreds of people, starting with parents and relatives and then friends and people curious to see what went on. Everyone left full of enthusiasm for the high quality of what they saw going on in that school.

To complete the program, the remaining members of the class were given parts to perform such as dancing and recitations of poetry. To end the program, finally, Juan Puig Elias was called upon for closing remarks, and he was very popular with the pupils. After refreshments, everyone left happily because many were looking forward to starting for the Colonies the following morning.

At the beginning of the new class, everyone was a little older, some had changed their group and made new friends. New techniques were to be learned, more advanced knowledge for the juvenile mind. This was the Modern School, and it was never static.

It shall be remembered: it was the only school that taught adolescents, starting at 12 years of age, lessons completely taboo even today about sex. For the most part, parents did not discuss the subject with their children. On their own, young people developed distorted ideas about sex based upon what they heard in discussions among friends who had unclear ideas about sex. The classes taught them to think clearly. Sex is the union of two very small cells (feminine and masculine, egg and sperm)—the start of life in the world.

In conclusion I say: There is no 'Modern School' at this time and the way things are going there may not be again. The 'Nature School' unfortunately ended its course on July 18, 1936. I saw the finale of a period of teaching that taught the world it was possible to live without wars or hatred but instead culture and liberty were guillotined.

May 1989

Reprinted from The Modern School Movement—Historical and Personal Notes on the Ferrer Schools in Spain. *For another account of this school - the Nature school, or La Farigola - see Pura Perez reprinted article in the Summer, 1992 issue of* ΣΚΟΛΕ.

INSIDE SHAKER MOUNTAIN SCHOOL:
DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

by Jerry Mintz

Governance of schools is becoming an increasingly important issue, as educators begin to realize how crucial it is to empower the participants in any educational process.

There are currently many hundreds of schools in the United States and other countries, both private and public, which operate with varying degrees of of student self-government. These take a variety of forms, including democratic vote by students and teachers, a majority vote, or consensus by students and teachers.

For the purposes of this discussion I am not including representative governments or student councils because, for the most part, they are nothing more than a sham and have very little decision making power. It is our contention that the more that the student learner can be empowered, involved in making decisions about his or her education, the more powerful that force can be toward helping them to take true responsibility for their own education. I feel that it is possible to set up such a decision-making process almost anywhere, and that all participants should have safeguards in that process.

In a true democratic process, decisions are made using all the creative forces and all the authority of the many participants who are involved in making those decisions. To the extent that they are disempowered by special groups having veto power, to that extent is the authority and the creative power of the total body eroded.

When we founded Shaker Mountain school, in 1968, it was set up as a democratic school, with the encouragement of the then-Commissioner of Education of the state, Harvey Scribner. Students were even the majority of our board of trustees. We did this because Scribner had said we needed to have the people we could trust the most on our board of trustees (rather than those who could raise the most money), to make decisions that would be best for the school. We felt that the ones we could trust the most would be the students, themselves. Throughout the years, all important decisions were made by the school meeting, with all students participating. When particular items were brought to the board of trustees, invariably the student trustees, the majority, would refer these decisions back to the school meeting, feeling that it was the proper forum for making any decision.

Those decisions even included such major issues as buying and selling buildings, the organization of major funding events, and all basic school policies. I feel that the procedures which were developed for the school meeting at Shaker Mountain, created the most effective school self government that I've ever seen, having visited several hundred alternative schools, including Summerhill, in England, which was the pioneer in this process.

In the earliest years, decisions were made by a straight majority. Our meetings were always long and sometimes emotional because the real decisions operating the school were made in the meeting. It always seems to me that schools that reserve their meeting time for 'Wednesday afternoon for one hour' couldn't really be democratic because there are so many more decisions to be made during the week. We often had meetings that lasted the entire Monday morning and Friday morning, sometimes spilling over into the afternoons. In addition, we had meetings for class announcements every morning during the week, which often had other decisions brought into them. Special meetings ~ could be called by any staff or student by ringing the meeting bell. I feel that this latter feature was very important because it wasn't necessary for someone to get permission to call a meeting or for a particular person to go around the school rounding up people for a meeting. If the meeting bell rang, there was a meeting, and the meeting bell was considered rather sacred around the school. In fact, if anyone ever rang the meeting bell when there wasn't a meeting, there was an automatic meeting on that person 'for calling a meeting when there wasn't one.' But this probably didn't happen more than a handful of times in 17 years.

In the following sections, I will outline the decisions governing the meeting as they evolved at Shaker Mountain School, however, I think it is important to point out that the meeting system is really more of an art than a science, and like all democracies, it is fragile and depends very much upon the respect it is given by the constituents. If at some point people begin to feel that they are not really the ones making the decisions, attendance and participation and creative energy fall off, not unlike the apathy manifested recently in national elections. On the other hand when people feel that they have important decisions to make, attendance is high.

One obvious implication of the last statement is that attendance at the meetings was not compulsory. Neither was attendance at all classes in the school. However, if a group of people at a regular school meeting felt that a particular issue was of such importance that everybody in the school needed to know about it and its consequences, somebody could propose that there be a 'super-meeting.' If it was passed, that meeting become a 'super-meeting.' It would be necessary for all people around the school to come to the meeting until it was voted that it did not need to be a 'super meeting' any more. This probably didn't happen any more than 10% of the time.

One interesting by-product of the school meetings was that the rate of increase in vocabulary on the part of the average student in school was 2 1/2 times the national rate. We actually had students increase 6 grade levels in a year in their vocabulary, even when they were otherwise not attending classes. We can only assume that this was a consequence of the student's participating in and listening to the meetings, and determining that they wanted to understand everything that was being said in them.

Two of the most common approaches to self-government are democratic decision making by the majority and decision by consensus of the group. Shaker Mountain school evolved an interesting blending of the advantages of both these approaches, being heavily influenced in the early years by their involvement with the traditionalist Mohawk Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy (We had regular exchange visits with them). This is perhaps quite fitting because it was the influence of the Iroquois confederacy that convinced Benjamin Franklin, among others, that democratic decision making was a good form of government and, therefore, a good one to be used for the fledgling independent colonies. In our early contacts with the Mohawks we discovered that they made their decisions at a council by having each member express their opinion. If a minority opinion was indicated they would then listen very carefully to that minority opinion, and allow it to be fully expressed, perhaps then changing the decision of the whole group. But ultimately, if they felt that the minority opinion was fully explored and that there were no options offered, the decision of the majority became the decision of the tribes.

An approach somewhat similar to this is used in consensus decision making, in which a person or persons may wish to 'stand aside.' They may disagree with the decision, but are willing to let the decision of the rest of the members stand. As it was described to me by Eric Joy, a teacher at the Arthur Morgan School, a Quaker School in Burnsville, N.C., consensus to him means 'sense of the meeting.' The clerk of the meeting will try to determine what this sense of the meeting is. If a person offers a dissenting opinion, they are given a chance to express what that opinion is, and then given some time to come up with an alternative proposal. But if they are not able to come up with an alternative proposal, it is incumbent upon the clerk to determine what the sense of the meeting is, and proceed on to make decisions based on that sense.

At Shaker Mountain, decisions were technically based on majority vote. However, it became customary at our meetings for the chairperson to ask people who had voted negatively to say why they had done so, if they were willing say. Subsequently, anybody in the meeting could then ask for a re-vote. The re-vote automatically reopened discussion. If a minority felt so strongly about a proposal that they just could not live with it, they could continuously call for re-votes at the meeting, effectively 'filibustering,' causing people to come up with a better or more comprehensive or more universally acceptable proposal.

Even after the meeting was over, if anyone still felt like it didn't sit well with them, they could call another meeting by ringing the meeting bell or putting it on a succeeding agenda. On the other hand, if people dissented on a particular decision, even if it was a fairly large number, but nobody called for a re-vote or another meeting, that decision would then stand. That minority would be essentially 'standing aside.'

By making the commitment to be part of a community that makes decisions by democratic vote, the minority members are obliged to stand by the consequences of the decision of the majority. As opposed to consensus decision making, the people who voted negatively could always say 'I told you so' if things don't work out well. This latter observation is not necessary just a joke, because one of the potential negative consequences of some kinds of consensus decision-making processes is that people could be manipulated out of their opinions in order to reach consensus.

In some school democracies the students elect a chairperson who then chairs the meeting for a semester or some fairly long period of time. This is how it is done at Summerhill. At Shaker Mountain, everybody at one time or another chaired the meetings. Because so many of our decisions were made by democratic meetings under so many different circumstances, it was felt that it was important that everyone learn how to run a good meeting. When a new student came into the school, they would often be elected to chairperson. Then people would 'kibitz' them into becoming good chairpersons as they struggled in the initial phases.

At the beginning of each meeting the people who wanted to chair the meeting would indicate so, or there could be nominations from the membership. There was then an immediate vote by show of hands, a process that generally would only take a minute or so. The person who got the most votes would become chairperson and start the meeting, usually with the words 'who called this meeting and why?' if it was a special meeting, or 'what is the first thing on the agenda,' if it was a regular meeting. If the chairperson needed to leave the room or was getting tired, they could appoint somebody else to be chairperson. If people felt that the person who was chairing the person was flagging in their attention or was not doing a good job at that point, they could call for a new chairperson. If there was a call for a new chairperson there would be an immediate vote whether or not there should be a new chairperson. If the majority disagreed, the chairperson continued. If the majority of people indicated that they thought there should be a new chairperson, the current chairperson could either name another chairperson at that point or there would be another immediate election. People tended to elect those whom they thought would get us through the meeting efficiently, but anybody who wanted to chair a meeting generally got a chance and had plenty of opportunities.

The meeting was not allowed to go on, whether it was a special or a general meeting, unless somebody had volunteered to take the log and keep track of the proposals and the decisions that were being made in the official log book. The log book was a large, hand bound volume of blank pages. Several log books would be filled up during a school year. When a topic was put on the agenda the chairperson would ask who put it on the agenda. The person who put it on the agenda would explain why they put it on. Then a discussion of that topic would ensue. People could make proposals that needed to seconded. Those proposals did not need to be voted on one at a time but could be voted on in a list when somebody 'called the question.'

One somewhat unusual decision that was made by the meeting concerned this 'calling of the question.' Rather than have this be done strictly by majority vote, it was determined by the meeting that if 5 people were opposed to the question being called (and, therefore, discussion being ended and a vote taken), that was sufficient for us to continue discussion. I don't recall where the number 5 came from, but it always seemed to be a reasonable procedure. For somebody just visiting the meeting for the first time, this could be very confusing because somebody would call the question; the chairperson would say 'all those opposed,' a vote would be taken, and if there were more than 5 people opposed. the meeting would continue.

For the uninitiated, they might wonder if they had missed something: Did they miss the vote of those in favor?

The skill of the chairperson was often determined by their ability to notice when people had raised their hands to speak, and in what order. Sometimes a chairperson would write the names down so they would remember the order in which people had raised their hands. However, it was considered the prerogative of the chairperson to call on people who they felt would move the meeting forward the best. This for example might include calling on people who had not spoken yet, even if they had only raised their hands after other people who had spoken before. It was also their job to point out to the meeting when they thought certain points had already been expressed, or that people were repeating themselves. The chairperson could call for a vote without the question being called if nobody objected.

New items could be added to the agenda during the meeting. This was sometimes done at the urging of the chairperson when he felt that the business had strayed from the original agenda item and that there was another issue to be decided.

It is important to point out that there was no veto power over the decisions that were made in the school meetings. The staff, for example had two long meetings a week, but the staff had no arbitrary power. The staff were free to offer whatever classes they wanted, and discuss whatever kinds of things they thought were important to the school, but they could not make decisions for the entire school. Any changes that the staff wanted to make in the overall school policy had to be brought to the school meeting. The meetings often made many creative decisions, decisions that might not have been thought of by any individual operating on their own. I think that it is important to note that we went into the meeting without having a pre-set idea about the decisions that the meeting 'should' make, but rather, fully expected that the meeting would be greater than the sum of its parts, and would find a creative solution that no one individual could foresee.

One early decision that was made at the school meeting was the creation of the 'stop rule'. It was noted that conflicts between students often arose when two students would be horsing around and one wouldn't realize that the other had become upset. In such a circumstance, it was decided that the person would then say 'stop' at that point, and if it was not clear what they were saying 'stop' to, they would say 'stop to wrestling', or even to 'stop to calling me fatty.' Those words would communicate the fact that that student was at the point of great frustration and would otherwise feel that they were about to get into a real fight. One of the first questions that would be asked in a school meeting was 'did so and so say 'stop'?' If they had said 'stop' and somebody broke the stop rule, it was taken to be a very serious transgression.

We note that at Summerhill, fining people from their allowances is often a consequence of negative behavior. At Shaker Mountain people generally were of low income and did not have money which they could be fined, so a lot of discussion centered around whether a student would be given a 'warning' or a 'strong warning' for a particular behavior that people objected to. It was sometimes amazing to me how important people found this distinction to be. A 'warning' meant that there would be no particular consequence at that point except for the equivalent of community censure. But a 'strong warning' meant that the next time the community could not take that option, but needed to take action. It was very uncommon for some kind of negative behavior to go beyond the strong warning stage. When this did occasionally happen people would go scrambling through the log to see if the person had gotten a warning or a strong warning for the previous behavior.

Our meetings were not only used for discipline in that sense, but also for positive brainstorming. For example class announcements would be made in meetings. Anybody could announce a class. Trip meetings would also be announced there, and the trip meeting would decide where they were going to go and how they would raise the money to get there.

If someone had a problem that came out in a meeting that looked like it was going to take more attention than the meeting could provide, someone would often propose that there be a 'small group' to help that person. Anybody could volunteer to be part of that small group but the people in the group would have to be approved by the person for whom the group was being formed, or in the case of a conflict between two people, by both parties. Our process of conflict resolution by meeting was so effective that we would often go an entire school year without any kind of a physical fight between students. Especially because of the size differentials and age differentials between students in the school, physical force was very highly frowned upon. The meeting did have the power to suspend a student from the school or kick them out of the school. What was more common as a result of serious transgressions over a period of time would be for the meeting to propose that a student be sent back through the admissions procedure and under the supervision of the admissions committee, as if they were a new student trying to get into the school. The admissions committee was comprised of students and staff who ran for the office and were elected by the school community annually. I regularly ran for it, because I usually had the basic information about a new student. Sometimes I was elected. Sometimes I wasnt. One student explained to me once that he had not voted for me because he felt I had enough power just sitting in on the admissions meetings.

One final and important point: People were respected in my school and in the meeting for who they were and what they said. I had to express myself strongly because of the fact that I had no arbitrary power. Others learned how to do the same. I knew I would be listened to, and that the meeting had fail-safe procedures. Sometimes my ideas were accepted by the meeting. More often, we came up with something better. We had faith in our ability, as a group, to solve any problem that came along. And for the 17 years that I was there, we did just that.

These ideas have been adapted for use by a wide variety of schools and programs. Sussex School, a 70 student independent alternative in Missoula, Montana, had a waiting list of 325. Those people, with the help of Sussex, hired me to help them create a new school. Organizing a meeting of potential students directly from the attendees, we had the 'first meeting' of the new school, before it even had a name. My niece, 11 year old Jenifer Goldman, whom I was homeschooling at the time, chaired the first meeting. This ultimately led to the creation of Shining Mountain School. and a spinoff school called Avalon. It also led to a public school alternative that was inspired by the process.

This democratic meeting process has also been developed for use by such diverse groups as LIGHT, a Long Island homeschool group, and Islip Alternative, a public school program for 'at risk' high school students. The homeschoolers were immediately at home with the idea, with even the youngest, a four year old, participating fully.

At first, the students at Islip were skeptical of the idea, but as we went along, you could see the body language of the students change. They committed themselves to the idea of their own empowerment, and continued to have such meetings every week. When the school district made plans to lay off some of their teachers at the end of the school years because of budget cuts, these 'at risk' students were the only ones in the district to mount a protest to the school board. One of the teachers told me that she was sure it was because they had become empowered by the democratic school meetings.

Jerry Mintz, indefatigable communicator and perennial enfant terrible (like Mozart, George Bernard Shaw and a few other self-absorbed originals), is known internationally to alternative and homeschoolers. Jerry is the founder and director of Shaker Mountain School, now defunct, former executive director of the National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools, currently editor of *AERO-GRAMME, the Alternative Education Resource Organization Newsletter,* to which you may subscribe by writing to Jerry at 417 Roslyn Road., Roslyn Heights, NY 11577.

LEARNING FROM MY MOTHER, LEARNING FROM MY DAUGHTERS

by Kate Kerman

Six years ago, I was at a Quaker retreat. Participants were asked to reflect and report on what their parents had given them as a spiritual base. I was stumped at first. My parents were, as far as I could tell, nominal Christians who went to Congregational churches for the social life and intellectual stimulation. What I had come to value as a Quaker, the mystical and personal relationship with God, hadn't been evident in my upbringing. As I pondered this, wondering a bit at the fact that I and my four siblings all seemed to be such spiritual seekers, I had a flash of insight. My mother, although never particularly expressing much interest or curiosity in spiritual matters, gave all of us a tremendous gift as she read out loud to us night after night, year after year. As she shared one book after another, she laid the foundation for my understanding of how the universe works. From Cinderella to Anne of Green Gables, from Winnie the Pooh to the Swiss Family Robinson, I grew up knowing there was hope in the world. These characters, and a myriad of other ones, taught me to believe that it is possible to shape one's environment, to better it. I came to expect a positive outcome despite adverse circumstances, based on the characters' attitudes and actions taken in response to those hard times. Love, hard work, strong relationships and magic - a connection with stronger and deeper forces than outward cause and effect - were all displayed over and over again in the stories I heard each night as I fell asleep.

I grew up in the 1950's. Not an auspicious time, many feel, for a woman to develop a strong self-image. Yet the stories my mother read were more often than not peopled by such wonderful female characters. Madeline ("to the tiger in the zoo, Madeline just said pooh pooh") who turned the adversity of an appendix operation into such an advantage for herself that "all the other little girls cried boo-hoo, we want to have our appendix out too." Cinderella, who had the guts to overcome a terribly dysfunctional family by choosing to take the risk of using magic. The old lady in the *Babar* books who did such a good job of raising the lost and homeless elephant that he became king of the elephants on his own merit. Alice, who held her own in two confusing worlds. Heidi, whose strong soul and common sense not only got her a good place to live, but bettered the lives of many people around her. Dorothy in the Oz books. Laura in the *Little House* books. Mrs. Wiggs of the cabbage patch. *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*. The mother in *Swiss Family Robinson* (whose practical foresight and astonishing collection of implements removed from the sinking ship made life possible for all those men in her life). Mary in the secret garden. Jo in *Little Women* and its sequels. What an amazing collection of role models! No wonder I like feisty little girls and hell-raising crones, no wonder that I am able to be so persistent in creating an environment which works for me.

As I outgrew the nightly reading times, I read to myself -

again, many books with strong women such as Nancy Drew, Jane Eyre, Mara, daughter of the Nile, Sakajawea, Jane Addams, Florence Nightingale, Nancy and Titty of the Swallows and Amazon books, Muggles and Curly Green in *The Gammage Cup*, Lucy and Susan in the *Narnia* books, Pippi Longstocking, Ramona, and Charlotte the spider. I fell in love with Ed partly because he was a college student who loved and read children's books. And eventually, I found myself reading every night to my own children, my daughters Ada and Hannah and my son Jesse.

Now, Ada took to reading at a very early age - around three. I encouraged her and she was intent on learning. I think I could have held her off for a year, and would now choose to do so since I think her eyesight suffered and that she has had to work to regain balance between her reading and more physically concrete activities. From Ada I have learned the value of following my own instinct in terms of allowing dependence until independence came naturally. We got a lot of complaints from other adults about how much we kept Ada with us - they worried when she was 18 months old that she was so dependent on us. I started being very grateful to myself that I had raised her that way when she blossomed into an amazingly independent and resourceful child. The point where I stopped worrying about it was when she was 5 or 6, and she came and showed me a game she had bought at a store one day while we were in town. There were several pieces missing. I said, "Oh, we should go return that." I turned around a minute later and discovered that she had gone off by herself to get a replacement - the kind of thing I still have a hard time doing.

Hannah, our second child, was mind-bogglingly different from her older sister Ada. We adopted her at the age of 11 weeks, and I spent essentially the next 8 years in struggle with her. She and I are both very stubborn people. By the time she was 18 months old, Ed and I were out at STEP parenting classes, trying to figure out how we could do this whole thing better. Ada had fit our style - let's talk it out and not get too emotional. Hannah was a whirlwind of emotions and contrariness. Ada learned to read when she was 3 and she simply absorbed all that schooly stuff - math, spelling, writing, how to tell time, ideas about history and other cultures. It all went into her brain and got categorized into easily retrievable files. Hannah learned to read when she was 11, and generally tended to ignore anything schooly. I wasn't accustomed to honoring the kind of learning she did best - watching people, sitting with animals and plants, listening, listening, listening to the world around her, standing as a toddler with her arms crossed on her chest and solemnly observing a friend of ours for twenty minutes until he became incredibly nervous, singing, singing, singing to her dolls and clamming up if I tried to listen in. She was the original for that statement you read in newspapers: "She sought her own treatment after the accident." Hannah did not want anyone else to direct her life, to tell her what to wear, how to get well, when to wash dishes or how and when to learn. The more I tried, the less it worked.

Finally, we started to learn how to honor her way. A very big influence on this was a week-long workshop that 8-year-old

Hannah and Ed attended at Pendle Hill, a Quaker study center near Philadelphia. It was led by Twylah Nitsch, a Seneca elder. She took Ed aside after watching Hannah for several days, not participating in the group. She told him three very important things about Hannah, who is half Native American. "Hannah is a little Indian girl. And if you are walking with an Indian and tell him to speed up, it is in his character to slow down." Secondly, "She must wear the colors of clothing she chooses for herself. That is very important. " (Aha! is this why Hannah has spent 7 years changing clothes several times a day?) and thirdly " You must honor her for her strengths. When she feels accepted for who she is, she will learn to read."

We homeschooled our children, and had nominally accepted the theory that children learn to read when they are ready. Accepting a theory like that is easy when your oldest child learns to read early. Dealing with the reality of Hannah's approach was a lot more of a challenge to me, coming as I do from a very academically oriented family. It took me two full years to come to grips with the truth of what Twylah had said. What finally tipped the balance was the fact that we moved and we had to go to our new school district and arrange a homeschooling program for Hannah, now 10 1/2 years old and reading at a bare "Cat in the Hat" level. I prayed a great deal before that meeting, and the help that came to me was a very firm understanding that I could not myself take credit for Ada's so-called academic advancement or blame for Hannah's so-called slowness. They were who they were and I was proud of both of them, and of myself for giving them what they needed and wanted. By then, I had done some reading and learning about Native American spirituality and I knew that Hannah's approach to the world came from that perspective. I couldn't teach her that approach myself, only respect it and help her pursue it as it arose. So I went into the meeting well-prepared, meeting the shock and concern over Hannah's reading with a lot of strength.

During the course of the next year she did learn the basics about reading, although I shall never know how, since she refused instruction as much as always. We continued to read out loud to her, and she rarely read to herself. My main consolation was the fact that she loved books and didn't seem to think badly of herself. At the age of 14, she started to read Scott O'Dell books. The first one took her two months to read. Two months later, she had read 4 or 5 of them. Within 6 months, she was reading full length adult fantasy novels, almost entirely feminist ones by such authors as Mercedes Lackey. She reads voraciously now at the age of 16, and is in the process of writing a long fantasy story which shows how much she has paid attention to the use of language and plot ideas. As a freshman at The Meeting School, she has done well in her classes because she knows what she is aiming for - a career working with animals, either as a vet or in some other way. Her spelling is still atrocious, and she is still working on arithmetic, but she feels great about herself and has become a major influence on the people around her because she is such a good listener and friend, such a thoughtful observer of the community.

Hannah's learning to read was a big process for her, and a life-changing process for me. I think she waited to learn until I accepted her fully, and I am grateful to her for her persistence. It would be nice, I think sometimes, to go back and start accepting her the day she came to us, but I am glad of the lessons we have learned from her in our own slow and painful manner. Without her tutelage, I don't believe I could be working effectively with other teenagers at The Meeting School. From her I have learned that it is essential to stay connected with that inner core of another person in order to give them the space to explore and learn what they can become.

Over the course of my life I have struggled with things I didn't like about my mother, my sisters, each of my daughters, and of course about myself. Standing as I now do between those generations, I find myself more and more able to enjoy these other women in my life for their own unique approach to life and learning and to honor my own approach - each way is valid, just as each author of all of those books my mother read to me writes well in his or her own special style.

Kate Kerman is admissions director, house parent and head of the Math Department at The Meeting School, a small Quaker alternative boarding school in Rindge, NH, and a member of the National Board of the NCACS. She also does and teaches healing therapeutic touch and has three children whom she has homeschooled.

HOME SCHOOLING:
A Personal Experience
by Hannah Lapp

'Where did you get your education?' or 'Which college do you attend?' are questions I find harder to answer than most people do. Education has meant much more to me than mere academic study.

My own formal education, and that of most of my 11 brothers and sisters, consisted of eight years of schooling at home. Our teacher was Mother, or our big sister Lydia. Going to school meant going to an upstairs hall or other suitable room in one of the sundry and fascinating dwellings we called home in those days. Our curriculum contained the basics for each grade in English, arithmetic, geography, and so on. Lydia selected our books from companies such as Scott, Foresman and Company, Laidlaw Brothers, and other publishers; some of the texts were as old as the McGuffey Readers.

As students, we were aware that education is serious business, and we worked our brains to the fullest. School was a thrilling opportunity. It opened the doors of knowledge and was a path into the mysteries of grown-up life.

Inborn in a healthy child is a thirst for the liberating powers of knowledge. Our teacher utilized these instincts of her students in introducing us not only to hard academic facts, but to an infinite learning process whose boundaries only our own self-

discipline could shape. School learning meant learning how to expend mental energy to get information we wanted. Thus our minds were exercised not only in academic questions, but also in such difficult social concepts as freedom through meeting obligations, and the price of privileges.

'How can eight years be enough?' is a justifiable challenge offered against an educational background such as my own. Certainly the potential of young minds is much too valuable to justify halting education at age 14.

It does not occur to me to separate the education I received after the age of 14 from my eight years of formal schooling. For I regard the disciplined acquisition of knowledge too highly to draw its boundaries at the doors of an academic institution. I also respect it too much to assume that it is best taken care of by a government bureaucracy or any other monopolizing agency. For where, but within individual minds and circumstances, can it be determined what type of knowledge is the most needful and how it is best obtained?

The most suitable continued education for me and most of my siblings involved such things as skills training on our farm and self-help through reading, using libraries, taking short courses in specific subjects, and so on. Those of us who later decided to pursue specialized professions had no problem passing a high school equivalency test and taking off from there.

Even during my years of going to school at home, those hours of book-learning that qualified as a legal education were only a small part of my total education. More than we could fully comprehend at the time, we youngsters were receiving daily moral, emotional, and intellectual exercises that were just as important in preparing us for adult life as the mandatory hours spent in school. For just as becoming literate was essential to a self-sufficient and productive future, so also was learning responsibility and proper human coexistence. These concepts were instilled in us through necessity in our large, close family with many children to feed.

My family's search for a suitable private school, and finally the search for a region having laws compatible with home schooling, was a major factor in our many migrations when I was small. It was also a factor in our often tight finances. We children learned thriftiness from infancy, and enjoyed few niceties. But it was enough for us to be healthy and happy.

The same circumstances that appeared at times unfortunate endowed us with learning experiences which could well be envied by the less needy.

For example, my older brothers and sisters were compelled to search out employment from a young age in order to help support the family. During one school term, two of my sisters took turns babysitting for a neighbor lady who was consequently able to stay off public assistance by holding a job. In the absence of welfare, two low income families were drawn together to trade resources, thus benefiting all parties involved. My sisters were able to maintain their grades in school by taking their books to work, and their job in itself provided excellent hands-on education. Lydia, one of the two, would go on to instruct her younger siblings and, afterward, many other students during her teaching career.

Our quest for jobs where we could work together to support ourselves while being home schooled led us to a number of different states. Among other ventures, we traveled about in our family station wagon, following fruit harvests in their season. Where our employers permitted it, family members six years old and up helped to earn. It was through their children's ambitious participation that my parents were able to save up a considerable sum of money so that by 1972 they purchased the farmstead that would come to embody our long-time aspirations.

Dad picked Chautauqua County in western New York for the site of our farm because of reasonable land prices and job opportunities on the abundant fruit and vegetable operations lining the nearby shores of Lake Erie. He also questioned our real estate agent about New York's tolerance toward home schooling.

"Try it and see," was the agent's response.

My parents proceeded to do so.

School officials first confronted us five months after we arrived in Brocton, New York. At the time, we knew of no other families who attempted to home school in New York, and we had no idea what to expect. However, my parents determined to stand on their beliefs, come what may.

Lydia was teaching six of us younger ones at home when school officials came to question Mom. We heard them speak from where we were studying in an upstairs room, and teacher and students fell silent, trying to catch their words. "We have to see to it that these children attend school legally," a woman's voice was stating. Many scenes raced through our minds, including those frequent wearying travels we'd undertaken in our determination to home school. And we pictured a drama of recent years when school officials chased Amish children through an Iowa cornfield, trying to forcibly enroll them in public school.

Challenging the State

Our right to home schooling was challenged even more severely after we moved to a farm in Cassadaga, which was to become our permanent home. The Cassadaga school administrator was greatly annoyed by the presence of this family from out-of-state attempting to defy his previously unchallenged authority. "Child neglect" was the charge he filed against my parents in family court.

The danger of forcible removal from our parents was the only thing we children could not acceptably face. So we banded together and arranged a secret hideout, unknown even to our parents, to which we would flee if the officials ever came for us. We never had to use it. Acquaintances and employers of ours were vocal in our defense, and the case was thrown out of court, thus demonstrating the power of concerned citizens in reining in oppressive government. Also somewhat influential in our case was a brand-new Supreme Court ruling in favor of Amish families who had objected to public schooling and education beyond the eighth grade for their children.

We cooperated with Cassadaga school officials as far as possible throughout our years of home schooling. Initially we underwent inspections, exams, and interviews. The Cassadaga school principal came to observe our school and concluded of the teacher, "She may not be certified, but she's certainly qualified."

Later on we simply maintained free and friendly communications with school officials. Local teachers offered us their out-of-date books. On several occasions Lydia was even asked by area parents to tutor their children whose public school education was proving insufficient.

After teaching at a mission school in Belize, Central America, for five years, Lydia returned home to teach her own daughter along with several nieces and nephews. Present regulations require her to submit quarterly progress reports on each student to the Cassadaga school. The paperwork aside, she still teaches as she sees best, and with her superior results, no one wants to interfere.

The success of schools such as Lydia's and other private schools is drawing more attention with every new statistic on the disappointing results of public education. I have heard various suggestions advanced by citizens concerned with bringing American education back to par: teach teachers better, return to the three R's, require more hours in school, and so forth. The difference between private and public education, however, involves issues more fundamental than these arguments. It involves the entire teacher-student relationship. Private, competing schools are bound to the individual choices of those whom they serve. Schools bound to mandatory regimens rather than client interests are inherently incapable of providing what I call true education—i.e., knowledge garnered through the inner instincts to inform yourself to your own benefit. There's a difference between this type of knowledge and the kind that is methodically dumped upon you by the state.

Since knowledge that benefits one person may not benefit another, true education is infinitely diverse, varying from methods as ancient and basic as apprenticeship, to the most sophisticated academic instruction.

We as a family are now far from alone as home schoolers in our county and state. Lydia meets and exchanges ideas with a number of other parents who teach their own children. She also subscribes to *The Teaching Home* magazine, where one can gather or share helpful information as well as insights into national home schooling developments. *The Teaching Home* (P.O. Box 20219, Portland, Oregon 97220-0219) informs us that there are 4,000 children on record as being home schooled in New York State. We know that there are more who are not on the record, perhaps fortunate enough never to be discovered by the educational bureaucracy. All told, there are an estimated 300,000 to 500,000 children being taught at home in the United States (The New York Times, November 22, 1990).

The Advantages of Home Schooling

It is from my own experience that I call these children fortunate. If their education bears any resemblance to my own, it will possess several advantages.

First, it will contain a much richer infusion of parental interests, which are more sensitive to a child's individuality and total needs than are bureaucratic state interests.

Another rather marked contrast between public schooling and home schooling involves children's peer relationships. The home-educated child is spending more time with adults and siblings and therefore devotes more mental energy to relationships spanning age and generation gaps. Some parents may not see this as desirable. Others find it offers a healthy alternative to the intense peer pressure in most public schools. Excessive peer pressure can and does inhibit a human being's ability to think keenly.

In my own growing-up experience, I spent fewer than average hours with children outside the family, and zero hours watching television. Certainly this restricted my range of interactions with others. It did not, however, restrict my intellectual exercises in the least. I turned to my own unbounded imagination. I turned to exploring everything in sight, including books. Adult books were interesting enough to read cover to cover, before I was 10 years old. For some reason, I never experienced, nor could I mentally conceive, the boredom with life displayed by many other youngsters.

Learning is exploration and discovery, whether you are observing the development of an ear of corn, working alongside Mom in the kitchen, going to school at home—or even attending a prestigious university.

Hannah Lapp is a dairy farmer and writer in Cassadaga, New York. Her moving account of her own homeschooling is reprinted from The Freeman *for April, 1991. I wish I could remember who sent it to me!*

COMMUNITY AS SCHOOL:

AFTERTHOUGHT

by Larry Becker

Numerous styles and philosophies of alternative education have been discussed in ΣΚΟΛΕ. One method of 'alternative education' for the public-at-large is the dis-information the media and our government often elect to provide us with. Bismark, North Dakota was a classroom that I needed to attend; I recommend that experience to everyone.

BISMARK, NORTH DAKOTA - OCTOBER 1ST & 2ND, 1991
OBSERVATIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

On Wednesday, October 2, 1991, a hearing was held in the United States District Court located in Bismark, North Dakota, concerning Leonard Peltier's request for a new trial. United States Attorneys, Lynn Crooks and Evan Hultman, appeared on behalf of the government while attorneys Bruce Ellison, Eric Seitz, and William Kunstler represented Leonard Peltier. That hearing, which Leonard Peltier was forbidden to attend, became the focal point for many people who came to Bismark that week attracted to the issues surrounding the matter of Leonard Peltier.

On the preceding Saturday, September 28, 1991, supporters of Leonard Peltier and curious onlookers and observers attended a gathering at the One World Coffee House on Broadway in Bismark. Bob Robideau (previously indicted, tried, and acquitted of the same incident for which Leonard Peltier now serves time) spoke concerning the background of the incident which led to the deaths of a Native American man and two FBI agents on June 26, 1975 at the Jumping Bull Ranch, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota, the extradition and trial of Leonard Peltier and the various court proceedings which since had taken place. While Bob was presenting the information and answering questions, his wife and partner Paulette interjected with various pieces of information while handling a table which sold T-shirts and books related to Leonard Peltier's circumstances. The books included Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, and two books co-authored by Jim Vander Wall and Ward Churchill, ***The Agents of Repression*** and ***The COINTELPRO Papers***, books concerning the actions of the FBI as a political police force in our country. This introduction to Leonard Peltier served to center everyone on the importance of the court proceedings which were to follow and the necessity of all of us to speak our minds and communicate our concerns about this matter.

On Tuesday, October 1, 1991 a well-attended support rally and concert was held at the United Tribes Technical College in Bismark. Leonard Peltier's attorneys were there, as well as Peter Matthiessen, the author of *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, and Leonard's relatives, including his mother and adoptive mother. At United Tribes, Mr. Matthiessen and Attorney Kunstler spoke about the need to rectify the injustices which surround Leonard Peltier's case and cited the despicable nature of the activities of the FBI, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the judicial system in general which caused Leonard Peltier to be convicted and his appeals, up to now, denied. The press was in attendance and they gave the event front page coverage in their papers. The entire event was carried live to Pine Ridge, South Dakota by Gary Richards of KILI Radio.

On the following day, October 2, 1991, the hearing took place before Magistrate Karen K. Klein. She is empowered to make a recommendation to Judge Paul Benson, the judge who presided over Leonard Peltier's trial, concerning the issue of the granting of a new trial. The hearing originally had been intended to cover three areas:

First - the pattern of outrageous government conduct which, among other things, created a climate of fear and terror at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and caused Leonard Peltier and others to form a reasonable belief that the FBI agents who drove onto the Jumping Bull Ranch on June 26, 1975 were there to cause Leonard Peltier and the other Native Americans serious physical harm, perhaps death.

Second - that this outrageous government conduct continued during the course of Leonard Peltier's trial in Fargo, North Dakota, in that the government and FBI manipulated the court into believing it was necessary to sequester the jury, provide a system of bodyguards for Judge Benson and the jury and, essentially, instill in both the judge and jury a predisposition of fear and bias against Leonard Peltier, his family, supporters, and AIM, in general. In other words, the climate of fear and terror which the FBI had created at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation was duplicated in the Fargo, North Dakota courtroom itself. It should be noted that the security was unnecessarily heavy at the October 2, 1991 hearing itself, in keeping with the government's previous posture.

Third - during the Fargo, North Dakota trial in 1977, the overwhelming emphasis of the government's case was that Leonard Peltier personally approached the FBI agents and, without provocation or cause, shot them to death at close range. To this end, the government argued that the agents had been shot to death with a bullet from a high-powered rifle, that the high-powered rifle was an AR-15, that there was only one AR-15 at the shoot-out location, and that that AR-15 belonged to Leonard Peltier. The government position that Leonard Peltier shot the agents to death at close range was endorsed and stated to be the personal belief of the federal prosecutor during his summation to the jury. The government thus presented the case almost exclusively with Leonard Peltier as the 'principal', the one who pulled the trigger firing the fatal shots, and not as an 'aider and abettor', merely present and assisting at the scene in some capacity. However, years later following the Fargo trial, during an oral argument on appeal to the 8th Circuit in a matter involving another aspect of Peltier's case, Lynn Crooks, the U.S. prosecuting attorney, admitted to the 8th Circuit panel of judges that the government really did not know and could not prove who approached the agents at close range and shot them. This was a shocking admission because it flew in the face of the government's case and position at trial. Mr. Crooks' comment to the surprised appellate judges was essentially that although the government's position was knowingly more than it could prove, he, Mr. Crooks, as a trial attorney, sought to get as much of a conviction as he could convince the jury to find against the defendant in that role. Apparently, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the FBI, at some point in this matter, lost sight of the issue of justice and decided that the American Indian Movement and Leonard Peltier were not going to be permitted the usual protections of our justice system. This last issue, the government's 'change in theory', that is, the switch from 'principal' to 'aider and abettor', was the only issue which Magistrate Klein ruled could be argued at the October 2, 1991 hearing. Additionally, Magistrate Klein ruled that Leonard Peltier could not personally present evidence in behalf of himself on any of these issues.

A large number of press were admitted and seated in the press section of the courtroom and, after them, a crowd of Leonard Peltier supporters, both Native American and white, filed in the remainder of the space up to the capacity of the courtroom. The remaining supporters stayed outside and kept a vigil while a Buddhist monk, Jungi Shimanuki, chanted outside. The hearing opened before a crowded courtroom at approximately 9:30 a.m.. After Magistrate Klein made a brief introductory statement, William Kunstler, an attorney from New York, as spokesman for Leonard Peltier's attorneys, told the court that Bruce Ellison, a South Dakota attorney, would read a statement from Leonard Peltier and present some introductory matters; Eric Seitz, an attorney from Hawaii, would present the legal argument as to the government change of theory argument; and that he, William Kunstler, would follow up with rebuttal to the government's reply to the legal argument. He then admonished Magistrate Klein for her refusal to permit Leonard Peltier to be present and pointed to an empty chair between counsels' chairs. There was an eagle feather in that chair and a sacred stone immediately before it on the counsel table. He stated that Leonard Peltier's spirit was here in the courtroom and that no interdiction of the court could keep that spirit from attending the hearing. With that, he sat down, and Bruce Ellison stood before the court in suit and tie with his long hair braided neatly down his back.

Mr. Ellison began by presenting an "offer of proof," a legal term which essentially states: If you were to let us present evidence of the government's outrageous conduct and the creation of bias in the court and jury during Leonard Peltier's Fargo trial by excessive security measures, this is a portion of what we would present as evidence. And with that, he handed a stack of video tapes and audio tapes to the government prosecutors and advised the court that he had earlier that day presented and filed them with the Clerk of the Court and that such matters were now on record with the court and opposing counsel. Although the outrageous government conduct was not a topic which was to be considered by the court during that hearing, Mr. Ellison proceeded to speak of such outrageous government conduct under objection by the government's attorney. Mr. Ellison then recounted an incident of such continuing conduct that occurred as recently as September 27th of this year. On September 22, 1991, CBS's "60 Minutes" aired a twenty minute report of the Leonard Peltier matter, during which they played a videotaped interview of Peter Matthiessen with a masked man called 'Mr. X' who admitted that he, and not Leonard Peltier, had shot the FBI agents. Then, five days following the '60 Minute' broadcast, the FBI entered the residence of an AIM member and pointing a gun to his head demanded to know the identity of 'Mr. X'. Mr. Ellison cited this intrusion committed at gun point as an additional example of the government's outrageous conduct which continues up to the present time. Again the government strongly objected, but did not in any way deny that such event occurred. Mr. Ellison then read into the record a strong statement written by Leonard Peltier from his jail cell in Leavenworth, Kansas which spoke to the lack of justice in his case and the need for courage on the part of the court to begin to set things right. (The full content of Leonard Peltier's statement is printed elsewhere in this newsletter.) After Mr. Ellison concluded, Attorney Eric Seitz rose to speak. However, he was interrupted by U.S. Attorney Lynn Crooks who asked to do an interim rebuttal in regard to Bruce Ellison's statements. The court permitted Mr. Crooks to make his rebuttal which consisted of his urging the court to ignore the matter stated by Mr. Ellison as being technically outside of the scope of the matters to be heard by the Magistrate that day. After he concluded his remarks, Eric Seitz then began.

Mr. Seitz presented the legal argument regarding the changed theory of conviction in a thorough and convincing manner with his argument liberally supported by numerous citations to prior relevant court holdings. The Magistrate asked many questions and Mr. Seitz responded to each, using them as an opportunity to continue his argument in a detailed manner with additional case citations and specific references to the Leonard Peltier trial and appeals. After further distinguishing the cases referred to by the government in its brief, and pointing out the inapplicability of such cases to Leonard Peltier's circumstances, Mr. Seitz concluded his remarks

At that point, Mr. Lynn Crooks then presented his reply for the government. He presented his argument that the government had not changed its theory, that they had stated all along that Leonard Peltier was not being tried just as the "principal", i.e., the individual who actually pulled the trigger at close range and killed the FBI agents but, rather, that he had also been tried as an "aider and abettor", someone who had a meeting of the minds, a mutual intent with whomever the principal was that the agents should be murdered and, in effect, worked in concert with the principal towards that end. He pointed to the fact that the indictment against Leonard Peltier and others included federal statutory language which included an aiding and abetting charge and a principal charge, and also mentioned that an aiding and abetting charge had been negotiated between counsel and had been submitted as an instruction to the jury. Further, Mr. Crooks urged that aiding and abetting had, generally, been incorporated into his closing argument presented during his summation to the jury.

At that juncture, the court then adjourned for the morning and all the press, spectators, and attorneys filed out past the security officers and metal detection devices down the elevator and out of the courthouse past the Buddhist monk who was still drumming and chanting in support of Leonard Peltier.

The hearing reconvened at 1:30 p.m. that afternoon. Mr. Crooks continued with his argument to the Magistrate. He repeated the position taken by the government in the morning and continued to argue to offset the positions taken by Leonard Peltier's counsels. During the course of his argument, which presented points and views that Leonard Peltier's supporters and his counsel believe were clearly not accurate, he was shown the respect of non-interruption and silence so that his points could be heard by the court. It should be noted that the courtroom was predominantly filled with Leonard Peltier supporters and they were respectful of the court, Leonard Peltier's attorneys, and the attorneys representing the United States Government. I mention this because, as I shall state later, that respect was certainly not returned by the U.S. attorneys present. Mr. Crooks then concluded his remarks.

At that point, Attorney William Kunstler stood to present the rebuttal of the government's argument in behalf of Leonard Peltier. During his presentation, he addressed questions that Magistrate Klein had asked of the other attorneys. He pointed out the inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the government's argument and answered new questions posed by Magistrate Klein. He particularly addressed himself to the question of whether the trial court in Fargo would have made different rulings concerning the introduction of exculpatory evidence, particularly on the issue of self-defense, if Leonard Peltier had been tried primarily or equally as aider and abettor instead of as the principal. It should be noted that in the trials of co-defendants, Darrelle Dean 'Dino' Butler and Bob Robideau in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, before Judge Edward McMannus, Judge McMannus had permitted the defense to introduce evidence which showed that the actions of the FBI had created a climate of fear and terror on the Pine Ridge Reservation and that it was reasonable for Butler and Robideau to believe that their lives were in danger that June day in 1975 when the FBI agents entered the Jumping Bull Ranch. This resulted in an acquittal of both defendants on the grounds that they were acting in self defense against the FBI agents. Through a Freedom of Information Act ('FOIA') inquiry following those acquittals, it was learned that the FBI did an analysis of that trial and concluded, among other things, that certain changes were necessary if a conviction of Leonard Peltier was to take place. Without going into the many changes which they were able to manipulate, they concluded that it was necessary to present Peltier as the individual who walked up to the FBI agents and shot them at close range because then it could be concluded that at that moment self-defense would be difficult if not impossible to argue and, accordingly, the court would be unlikely to permit introduction of evidence of self-defense, at all. The FBI's conclusion was accurate.

Mr. Kunstler, over and over, in response to questions by the court, stated that this is black letter law, that under a change of theory, Peltier was absolutely entitled to introduce the evidence that would substantiate his claim of self-defense, that the failure to permit same was improper at the Fargo trial, and that under the change of theory it would be even easier to prove that the refusal or failure to permit evidence pertaining to self-defense would be clear reversible error which would necessitate a new trial. Furthermore, as Mr. Kunstler urged, the 8th Circuit had already ruled, and it was now law of the case, that the government had tried Leonard Peltier on the theory that he was the principal, not on the theory that he was either a principal *or* an aider-abettor. The magistrate must rule, he urged, that if Peltier is now to be considered as having been tried as an aider and abettor that the exclusion of the self-defense evidence was a monumental error requiring reversal and a new trial.

During the course of Mr. Kunstler's presentation, Mr. Crooks began to gesture, mock, and laugh with disdain, in a manner clearly disrespectful to Mr. Kunstler. Mr. Kunstler interrupted his presentation and turned to Mr. Crooks and then back to the court. He noted to the court the prosecuting attorney's laughter, disdain, and levity in the face of the serious nature of what is taking place, including the over-16 years of incarceration Leonard Peltier has served as a result of the egregious conduct of the FBI and the U.S. Justice Department. Pointing to Lynn Crooks, Mr. Kunstler said, "This is a man with no conscience!" He continued that while this case may be a game to the prosecutor's office, it is definitely a matter of grave concern for Leonard Peltier and his attorneys. Mr. Kunstler then explained to the Magistrate the entire history of the case as well as the conditions in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation prior to the fatal incident. It clearly was important to defense counsel to touch her heart as well as her legal acumen, for without the heart, justice can never be served and improper actions cannot be seen. In retrospect, Peltier's attorneys had statements and arguments that needed to be made and they did not permit either the U.S. prosecutors or the court to prevent those statements from being made and becoming part of the record.

At the conclusion of Mr. Kunstler's comments, Mr. Crooks rose and stated that he felt that much of what had been said was for the benefit not of the court, but for the reporters and the audience and admonished the court to review only those matters directly pertinent to the one issue before it, the change of theory by the government and how that would affect Peltier's right to a new trial. The hearing concluded, followed by a press conference by the Peltier's defense team, who made themselves available to questions from the press and other media.

Immediately after the hearing, there was a gathering at the One World Cafe where Bob Robideau, his brother, and Bruce Ellison spoke and answered further questions from the press and others concerning the Peltier matter and where it goes from here. In about sixty days from the hearing, Magistrate Klein should make a recommendation as to whether retrial should be granted, which recommendations will be forwarded to Judge Benson to make a formal ruling. Peltier's attorneys anticipate that the ruling will be adverse to Leonard Peltier and that another timeconsuming appeal will be necessary. A videotape of the story of Leonard Peltier, "The Life of a Warrior," was presented which recounted in dramatic fashion much of what had been presented earlier.

For myself, I found it difficult to leave the site of the courthouse after the hearing ended and after a while there were just a few of Leonard Peltier's supporters standing around while the press was packing up. One of Leonard Peltier's Native American supporters, Benny Carnes, had brought his pipe and braids of sage and sweet grass. He graciously invited us to join him in a sacred pipe ceremony and we all smudged in the fragrant smoke of the sage in front of the courthouse while another Native American member of AIM prayed to the Creator and thanked the Creator for all the blessings given. He then asked the Creator for strength and wisdom to enter the hearts of the court, judge and magistrate, so that they might make their determinations with compassion and in a right way.

Later that night, I went to the One World Cafe again to watch the Leonard Peltier video from beginning to end and to say my good-byes to a number of people that I had met while in Bismark. The One World Cafe certainly made itself available to Leonard Peltiers supporters and I found as I shopped and made my way through Bismark that he had widespread support in that community among those people who had taken the time to learn about the conditions on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and what had happened.

It was a curious thing for me to observe, as an outsider and an admitted self-righteous attorney with a considerable amount of legal experience. I had just recently become aware of what was really going on in this Peltier case. Eight years ago I had sought out Matthiessen's book, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, to learn that the book was unavailable except through a finder of rare books who wanted $125.00 for one copy of it. Unfortunately, I could not afford to buy it. The book had been pulled off the shelves and its publication had ceased as a result of a lawsuit against its author and publisher by the governor of South Dakota and an FBI agent who claimed that the comments about them within that book were libelous. The lawsuit against author and publisher for $45,000,000.00 effectively kept the book off the shelves and out of my hands and out of the hands of untold others for approximately eight years. The courts eventually vindicated Peter Matthiessen and his courageous publisher, but not without the financial costs incurred to defend the lawsuit and not without the social costs caused by this form of "censorship." For eight years - half of the time Leonard Peltier has been in prison - the public has been denied the right to know about his case, about him individually, about the conditions at the Pine Ridge Reservation, about the actions of the governor of South Dakota, about the actions of the FBI in general and certain of its individual agents in particular, and about the continued failure of the United States and its justice system to admit to government wrongdoings and make amends.

An overview of the case shows a disregard for fairness and an almost religious worshipping of form over substance.

simplistic correctness and 'gotcha' on the part of our government. To offset this, it is necessary to step back and compile, in a boring, tedious manner, each and every unfair tactic, miscommunication, non-communication, suppression, non-disclosure, unfair adverse ruling, etc., and present it to the public through the media, courts, and by word of mouth. Many questions are spawned by this examination. Why did the United States/FBI choose to so vigorously contest the post-Fargo trial FOIA requests made by Leonard Peltier's attorneys? Why did the government litigate; why didn't it voluntarily open its records and clear the air? Also, why haven't the complete records ever been disclosed? Why was no legal action brought by the Justice Department against the FBI agents who knowingly suborned perjury in relation to the extradition proceedings and the Myrtle Poor Bear affidavits? Why isn't the Justice Department investigating the allegations that the FBI armed the Tribal Council's GOON (Guardians of the Oglala Nation) Squad on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and provided it with intelligence information setting Native Americans against Native Americans? Why isn't the Justice Department investigating the cover-up of the cause of death of Anna Mae Aquash, and dozens of other Native people? Why isn't the Justice Department investigating the economic exploitation of Native American traditional people by corporate powers extracting energy resources from Native American lands? Why have so many Native women been sterilized without their permission or knowledge? Why isn't the full prosecutive weight of the government directed toward investigating these and other wrongs?

It is clear to me that the United States Government's treatment of Leonard Peltier (and the actions of the United States towards Native Americans historically and currently) deeply wound white society and cripple it from the inside. The government's callous attitudes are reflective of the dominant white culture - there is no interest in reflection, in looking inward to examine the dark side - our inner shadow, the part of us we don't like. Our white culture denies the unpleasant, sometime cruel, aspects of its own nature, and more importantly, its own actions. This denial rots the fabric of our society and leaves this country with no moral strength at all. Without that moral strength, we will continue to repress, with more and more violence, physically, economically, and otherwise those who remind us of the truth of our inner malaise, our lack of soul.

The Peltier case is an occasion for the United States Government to examine closely its conduct, to declare itself at fault, and to begin to heal, not only the scars and wounds it has inflicted upon the Native American people and other minorities in this country, both political and racial, but also to heal some of its own inner wounds which are hidden by a thick layer of unacknowledged self-righteousness. Throughout this proceeding, it was easy to ask: Where is the heart of America? Where is the courage to feel shame? Where is the strength to correct injustice?

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For further information about Leonard Peltier's case, AIM and the government's response to it. I recommend Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, Jim Messerschmidt's *The Trial of Leonard Peltier*, Vander Wall's and Churchill's *The Agents of Repression* and *The COINTELPRO Papers*, Rex Weyler's *Blood of the Land*, and the Newsletter of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee - *Spirit of Crazy Horse*, P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

Larry Becker

Reprinted from Spirit of *Crazy Horse, the Newsletter of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee*, October - November 1991 Issue.

Larry Becker, a long-time Free School community member and Free School parent, is a civil-liberties-minded attorney and student of the Native American way. Along with his attorney-wife Ellen, he constitutes one-half of the distinguished legal firm Becker & Becker, a firm they created together after quitting highly paid positions in hot-shot legal firms! His presence at the Peltier hearing as assistant council was a spontaneous act of conscience - and heart-felt sympathy - on Larry's part - a style which characterizes everything he does. He Ellen have three children in the Free School.

Snoring

After a long day fishing in the sun
My father would sleep beside me
In the one-bed cabin musty with mold
With the promise of rising before dawn
A quick breakfast
And to the coolness of the water.

I knew to race him to sleep
And avoid the starts and stops
Of his loud night-shadow dancing
But this time the race was lost
And I sat at the starting line
Listening
To him pull away
Along his bumpy road of slumber
And watching the night spots dancing on the wall.

Larry Becker
1989

ΣΚΟΛΕ
Journal of Alternative Education
72 Philip Street
Albany, NY 12202
Dear friends:

September 7, 1992

We recently received your August 20 newsletter, and wonder if you would be interested in using the enclosed article?

It was written for *Community Service News*, so if you do use it or excerpts from it, they should bear the inscription, 'Reprinted from *Community Service News*.'

You seem to be doing an interesting job.

Sincerely,
Ernest Morgan

DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNITY.
The Seed Bed of Civilization
by Ernest Morgan

Arthur Morgan held that it was in the face-to-face relationships of the small community that the best qualities of human culture tended to develop—honesty, good will and social responsibility. He commented that these qualities tend to erode in urban life, despite steady renewal there through the influx of people from the small communities.

I observed a dramatic illustration of this while serving as an administrator of Arab Relief in the Middle East, in 1950, where my work brought me into contact with the three types of Arab culture.

One of these was the culture of the nomadic people—the

Bedouins. Though not without some special virtues, the Bedouins would steal the shirt off your back. A colleague of mine, visiting a Bedouin sheik, came out of the tent to find the wheels stolen off his Jeep. The sheik was outraged. 'To steal from the Sheik's guest is like stealing from the Sheik himself. Dig those wheels out of the sand and put them back on the Jeep.' —And they did.

The urban culture was similar, and the people were a mixed lot. Walking down the street in Cairo I was carrying a pen-light in the outside pocket of my jacket. My companion cautioned me: 'Remove that light from your outer pocket and put it inside. Someone will brush against you and it will be gone.'

The third Arab culture was that of the villagers, or Fellahin, as they are called. I had a crew of a dozen or so of them in my Food Distribution Center, and found them to be industrious, friendly—and completely honest! Similarly, whereas the Bedouin and town women felt it necessary to wear veils to shield their faces from the lustful gaze of strangers, the Fellahin women found no need for veils.

It would seem that the small community was, indeed, 'the seedbed of civilization.'

The Enhancement of Group Life

'Community' is not the monopoly of villages and communes. It can be developed to excellent advantage in many types of groups. Scott Peck places strong emphasis on this, and on procedures for bringing it about.

One of the most striking experiences of community in my career took place in the Middle East. I was a member of the team of 52 volunteers (a full deck!) who were brought together by the American Friends Service Committee to administer food, shelter and health care for the Arab refugees in the Gaza Strip.

We were a mixed bunch, from several countries, and varied ethnic backgrounds—African, Asian and European. Our religious affiliations were equally varied—Moslem, Catholic, Protestant and unchurched. Our responsibilities were tremendous. We were responsible for food, shelter and health care for 200,000 refugees living in very difficult conditions, but our group had a wonderful spirit of community and fellowship which enriched our lives. This was one of the most meaningful periods of my career.

This was not an accident; it had been planned that way. Each evening we had supper together in a big hall and after supper we sang songs from the International Songbook published by World Around Songs. Then members of the team were called upon to tell of their experiences. We shared our daily problems. An important unifying force was that we were all unpaid volunteers—we were there because we cared. Inevitably, the community spirit of the Gaza team impacted on our relationship with the Palestinian refugees, especially the 1400 of them who were employed to help carry on the necessary work.

The quality of community did not appear to be diminished by the substantial turnover which took place. This turnover happened because the project ran beyond its original time frame and many of the early volunteers were unable to stay. A striking testimony to the strength of the community feeling is the fact that at a reunion of the team members forty-two years later, more than sixty showed up!

Let me offer a totally different experience in group community. For years I ran a printing business. I wanted my staff to come together not as unrelated individuals but as a cohesive group who cared about one another and enjoyed their time together.

When I hired a new person I took him or her on a tour of the establishment, explaining how things worked and introducing the new person to all the people, as one might do with a new guest arriving at a party. Everyone was given a key to the plant and was free to come and go at all hours. Staff members were free to use the equipment to do printing for themselves or for non-profit institutions or projects with which they were concerned. For retired staff members we arranged regular part-time jobs so they could retain their fellowship and identify with the group.

The pursuit of community in the business has structural aspects, too. For forty-five years the staff have taken part in electing the Board of Directors. In recent decades, when my son came into the management, he instituted an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) whereby the staff now own fifty-six percent of the stock - and the percentage is growing.

At one time our company had a visit from Henrik Infield, who was Executive Secretary of an organization devoted to community development. He was impressed with our outfit and urged that we do more things together, carrying on together as many of the activities of life as we could.

After reflecting on his advice I found myself in partial disagreement with him. I felt that each of us belonged to several communities; for example, the family, the neighborhood, the church, the bowling club, what have you. I wanted our group to be a good and happy community of people working together, but I didn't want it *competing* with other communities. Community should be a way of life—not an experience to be focussed on a single group.

One more reflection on "group community."

In the course of growing up I attended nine different schools. In one or two of these there was a sense of community. In the rest it was every man for himself. Years later, when my wife and I launched the Arthur Morgan School, community was central. Even more important than the curriculum is the habit of mutual affirmation which the school cultivates. It is from community and mutual affirmation that a sense of self-worth is derived, and there can be no more important function of education.

Human Uranium

A frequently overlooked dimension of community involves what Arthur Morgan characterized as "human uranium."

A cubic yard of granite, he said, contains enough uranium to blow up a mountain, but the particles are inert because they are separated from one another. Bring them together in a critical mass and you can blow up the mountain.

So it is with people who have active social concerns. Too often they are lost in the mass, and their concerns do not find effective expression. Bring them together in community and things begin to happen.

This time I cite my personal experience with Celo Community. Though diverse in religion and in educational background, and living in separate homes, Celo Community members enjoy active fellowship, and come together spontaneously to make things happen.

A group of them took the initiative in launching an innovative and highly successful food co-op. Today, I might add, eighty percent of the members of that co-op are from outside the Community. Similarly a group of community members launched 'Cabin Fever University'—an arrangement whereby people share special knowledge and skills with their friends, with no money changing hands (except $1 for the catalog). As with the co-op store, people from outside the community flock to the 'University.' Craftspeople in Celo Community—potters, weavers and such—set up a cooperative retail shop on the highway, to sell their wares. They were joined promptly, and in force, by craftspeople from outside the community. Similarly, an ambitious project 'The Rural Southern Voice for Peace', an organization concerned with peace and social issues, is based in the Community, as are other important projects. Here, indeed, is 'human uranium' at work.

Collectives

An important but highly varied dimension of community consists of communes and other forms of collectives. Their number is growing and there is much diversity among them.

Twice in the early years of my business I set about to form a collective. In both cases I was dissuaded by the reluctance of my colleagues. This was probably just as well, since I didn't have an appropriate social base for a collective and didn't know what I was doing.

Later I had occasion to visit some successful collectives and observe their operation at first hand. One interesting project was the Sasa Kibbutz, in Israel. A group of Polish Boy Scouts years before had formed a strong group bond. After they had grown up and married they moved to Palestine (not yet Israel) where they lived together communally as a 'working kibbutz', holding such jobs as they were able to find. They studied farming and saved their money and after a time took over an area of salt swamp at the foot of Haifa Bay. The land was too salty for food crops but provided good hay and pasture, so they started a dairy. Areas too salty for hay or pasture they converted into fish ponds for raising carp. The Kibbutz was prospering.

The children there seemed to enjoy a positive relationship with all the adults—not just their parents. When they grew up, children were encouraged to join the kibbutz, but before they could do so were required to go out into the world and make their way for a time. I was impressed with the Sasa Kibbutz.

I visited another interesting collective, the Bruderhof, at Rifton, New York. Originally founded in Germany (hence the name Brother House) it had shifted to Britain, then to Paraguay and finally to Rifton, N.Y. It has a 'common purse' and common ownership of property, and operates some small businesses. Its unifying principle is 'the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man in Jesus Christ.' It expects total commitment from its members and has strong leaders ('Servants of the Word').

The Hutterite Community in Canada long ago affiliated with the Bruderhof and more recently some successful branches have been established.

My experience with collectives being limited I am giving them less attention here than they perhaps deserve.

Community in an Urban Setting

People in cities tend to build walls around themselves, so that they are surrounded by strangers. Under these conditions the human qualities engendered by community life tend to erode.

But there have been successful experiments in developing community in urban neighborhoods. An outstanding case was the Hyde Park/Kenwood neighborhood, near the University of Chicago. Black families were starting to move in and there was the beginning of a panic, with white families moving out. At this juncture the Social Order Committee of the 57th Street Meeting of Friends (Quakers) came onto the scene, bringing black and white families into fellowship and building a sense of community. The exodus of white families was checked

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and a stable community life was achieved.

A similar circumstance arose in an area in Philadelphia that seemed on the verge of becoming a slum. As in Chicago, under Quaker leadership black and white residents were brought together in fellowship, to form a neighborhood community. Powelton Village, as it is called, has been highly successful.

Bert Berlow, of Minneapolis, has been active for years in the field of urban communities but I don't have the specifics on his results.

Clearly, it is possible to develop good community life in urban settings but this requires thoughtful and skillful organizing effort. Community in the Macrocosm

Thus far I have discussed mainly the dimensions and aspects of the small community—areas in which I have a background of knowledge or experience.

One of the values of good community life, as I pointed out in the paragraphs on 'Human Uranium' is the tendency for community values to be projected toward the outside world, as in the case of 'The Rural Southern Voice for Peace.' While the small community—especially an 'intentional' community—does offer an 'escape' from typical urban life, it can—and often does—do a lot more than that in terms of social and political involvement.

Rampant individualism, as opposed to a healthy community spirit, threatens to wreck modern society, regardless of the particular form the society takes. I saw this coming in the Soviet Union early in the Stalin era and published an article in *The Christian Register*, 'The Bankruptcy of Bolshevism' back in

1937. The Communist movement might have led to a humane and beautiful society had the spirit of community prevailed, but it was corrupted by individualism and finally went down the drain.

We now see the free enterprise system, another system with fine social potential, likewise headed for the sewer, and for the same reason—rampant individualism and the lack of the spirit of community.

America is a prize example. The extreme and growing maldistribution of ownership and income in our country is such that it is only by the astronomical expansion of debt that the buying power of the people can keep pace with producing power—and keep the wheels turning. This is a form of medicine which must be taken in ever-increasing doses—until it kills the patient. As matters now stand, when the borrowing stops we crash. The Great Depression of the 1930's was never solved, but merely postponed through inflation and massive borrowing, fueled largely by war and preparation for war. Growth is put forward as a solution, but perpetual growth is a sure form of suicide.

I will not take space here to set forth economic and political measures which might be effective in achieving a humane and stable society, but I will say that the emergence of a spirit of community throughout society is an essential prerequisite to the successful pursuit of those measures.

Ernest Morgan is the son of Arthur Morgan, founder of Antioch College, Celo Community and many other socially innovative institutions and schools. Ernest is himself, along with his wife Lucy Griscom, the founder of Arthur Morgan School in

Burnsville, NC. His account of that history appears in the Winter issue of ΣΚΟΛΕ. Ernest's article is reprinted from (the Celo) Community Service News."

SPECIAL SECTION:
CLASS/RACE/GENDER:
CITIES: THE SHAME OF OUR DEMOCRACY
EDITORIAL COMMENT:

I see this section as a kind of continuation of the Gatto-Carnegie Hall challenge to the establishment, because that establishment has effects which ramify into a broad spectrum of areas which damage the integrity of our society's institutions - family structure, education, health care delivery (including birth, dysfunctionality and death), the law, the media, the government, the church. I see all of the problems generated by our failures as a society as having their origin in the values promulgated by the establishment for perpetuating its own materialistic-mechanistic-narcissistic survival.

The social scientist Gunnar Myrdahl is reported, in the Washington University Alumni magazine, as having once remarked that our national government seemed to him to operate on the principle that the failure of a policy was an indication that that policy simply hadn't been given enough scope, enough time - and so should be pursued longer and more thoroughly; in fact, it seemed to Myrdahl as though the *less* it worked, the *more* intensively they pursued it! - and he added that if city councils ran their municipal establishments on the same principle, everything would grind to a halt, and nothing would ever work!

First and foremost in this section comes the global perspective of Jacques Cousteau, the man who I believe understands better than anyone else the overall effect of this massive human/societal failure to grasp the reality of the fragile nature of our global ecosphere. But even beyond the understanding he has which is based on decades of personal experience, he is uniquely qualified to give eloquent voice to the urgency of the need for us to make a start on tackling the problems which are bringing about the death of our habitat through irreversible changes. He warns that we have thirty years to bring those problems under control.

It is runaway population growth which the Captain cites as the primary issue to be addressed. He relates this problem all of the others - but most particularly, to the shape of our cultures in their ways of treating human beings - and in particular, in the degraded status of women (and by extension, children) in so many countries. He backs up his statement with statistics drawn from several cultures. I quote from his speech:

> In all the countries with an excessive birthrate, women are segregated, deprived of appropriate health care; the rate of illiteracy among women is one-third higher than for men. Two examples of the importance of education of women:
>
> South Yemen: Women's illiteracy: 95% Birthrate: 3.4%
> Thailand: Women's illiteracy: 15% Birthrate: 1.3%
>
> The same kind of proportionality exists between the birthrate and the percentage of GNP allocated to social security and eventually to retirement plans. Unfortunately, during the past 10 years in developing countries, the mean percentage of the national product allocated to health, social security and education has decreased by about 20 percent while defense expenditures have increased: Today, in less-favored nations, armies spend the same share of the budget as

health and education combined, while this proportion is only 55 percent in the advanced nations.

Even though our own rate of growth is less spectacular than that of 'under-developed' countries, the same inequity exists here toward our own 'under-classes' in the same terms Cousteau cites for those less well-developed countries - and with far less excuse for being that way! The problem is not really individual, but institutional. Our social institutions which bear the overall responsibility for the lives of people, have become, as John Gatto says, solely concerned with their own survival, and have forgotten the purpose for which they were originally established. This has happened, in my opinion, because we do not teach democracy - peer-level selfhood, or self-regulation - choose your own term for this process - to our children - and so when they become parents, they do not make sure that such learning is available to their children.

It is in our having abandoned our own initial purpose as a democratic nation with 'liberty and justice for all' that I speak of our shame. We have all invested ourselves in believing in the potentiality of a cultural/economic system of unchecked industrialism - 'free enterprise' - the belief that 'the business of America is business,' which we adopted after our national birth in the American Revolution, to create a culture based on a belief in freedom of personal aspiration leading to universal prosperity. It is the American Dream, and has been our national myth.

We have believed in the gradual evolution of a society with no classes, with prosperity and good fortune shared equally by all who are willing to work for it, and only the lazy, the morally unfit or the stupid deprived of this general well-being. Universal education was considered by all to be the means whereby this goal was to be achieved. This myth dies hard, even though its headlong pursuit is destroying most of our planetary resources, overrunning the earth with far more people than it can sustain, and damaging our climate and our habitat in lethal ways!

We Americans bear a tremendous responsibility for promoting this way of life among the pre-industrial countries as a solution to difficulties, and by Gresham's Law ('Bad money drives out good money; bad culture drives out good culture.') supplanting their simple way of life with its focus on survival by work with our quick-fix, instant gratification through easy and mock heroic but illegal or morally infantile patterns for acquiring money to play the game with, as promoted by so many stories on TV or in the movies.

This American style of 'entertaining' children and immature adults is now world-wide, along with the much-admired CocaCola/McDonald's syndrome for addicting people to a belief in instant gratification. We have taught the nations of the earth to drive out or destroy their own native cultures in exactly the same manner as we have destroyed our own Native American, Black, immigrant and underclass cultures. The article on tribal societies and the genocide being practiced world-wide by nations against their own indigenous peoples is based on a study of this phenomenon.

The hidden destructiveness of our culture is the best-kept 'secret' we have - and its hiding place is right out in the open, which is the best way ever devised for hiding something! By our method of acquainting ourselves with the fact of its existence while withholding the living reality of its destructive effects on thousands of people, we desensitize our people. We either ring the changes on it as drama (via the media) and then cut away to some advertisement - or turn it into statistical data to be memorized from a textbook - punctuated by the bell that ends the class - to be later regurgitated on a test. In either case, the end result is a discontinuity of one's ability to think concretely and effectively. This way, it is possible to know and not know - simultaneously!

The preservation of this secret is the most important function now of both institutions - and this function is carried out in many, many ways seldom acknowledged because they are practiced covertly, by cultural osmosis, as it were. No one ever intends to do damage! But the end result is as though they did. As Jonathan Kozol says, these kids know they are throw-away people.

Since we have always lived in class/race-segregated enclaves, with our areas of social and racial deprivation and misery walled off by their circumstances in isolated rural pockets or in the dark streets of our urban ghettos, it has been only fairly recently that the illusion has begun to wear thin, largely because it no longer affects only those segregated populations. I find it peculiarly impressive that it is an article in a journalistic rag like *The Daily News* (q.v.) that is doing the work of waking people up to what is going on! Read it and weep. Please. I did.

So now the cat is coming out of the bag - our shame walks the streets of our cities, pushing shopping carts loaded with the discards from our rubbish heaps, sleeps on heating grilles in the wintertime, freezing to alcohol-soaked death under bushes in our parks during the winters! And the exposure of our shameful neglect of a whole underclass of vulnerable human beings now includes our patterns of neglect and abuse of our children. The drug problem, teen-age pregnancy, child molestation and abuse, TB, AIDS and other venereal diseases, suicide are as much a part of the majority culture now as of the lower classes they used to be thought exclusively characteristic of. Even priests of the Church have been found guilty on a wide scale of this betrayal of trust! It is a national disease we are discovering to be rampant in our midst. But we still can't really get the message! It is only in the cities like New York, Chicago and Los Angeles that these issues have become so ubiquitous now that we may have to pay attention. In this section are three poignant articles addressing this unaddressed issue.

Thus, it is plain to me that the problem of overpopulation is not solely a remote one that can be addressed by joining the Peace Corps. It is parochial - no, even closer - it is personal, attitudinal - and its basis is an attitude we all share, whether actively or simply by neglect and indifference. We are happy to take care of the welfare of our own children or the children from our neighborhoods. My question is: when are we going to pay equal attention to the plight of the children we *don't* live with, the invisible ones— invisible, that is, to the white, middle-class majority? And why is it relevant to all of us on the planet? Can we bear to connect up these apparently disparate threads of life's meaning, make them as relevant to our own lives as the ones we live with, see every day?

'No man is an island.' Do we want to remember this fact? Can we bring ourselves to understand that our problems are all cumulatively interrelated? Can we begin learning the lesson in time? Or are we going to be left 'on the beach,' thirty years down the line, staring at the tattered remnants of the banner proclaiming, 'There Is Still Time, Brother!' - like the final scene from the fifties movie of that name? Thirty years will tell the story.

So let's go back to our lessons, OK? Here follows a long line of connectedness followed in terms of articles expressing various parameters of the problem as it flows all the way from the global down to the particular, the effect of society's institutions on one family. Please read this material with your hearts open! These are your children they are speaking about! Our children are *all* children!

Mary Leue

EARTH AS SCHOOL; EARTH AS COMMUNITY: VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE:

CONVINCE TO CONQUER

by Captain Jacques Cousteau

In June, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, hosted the unprecedented United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). As a specially invited guest, Captain Cousteau met with Fernando Collor de Mello, President of Brazil and of UNCED, King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden, UNCED, Secretary-General Maurice Strong, ministers, delegates, and other eminent persons, including President Bernard Dowiyogo of the Pacific island country of Nauru, and Dr. W. Jackson Davis, science adviser to Nauru. Nauru is the site of a recent Cousteau expedition.

Among the audience were an Amazonian tribesman, one of many spokespersons for indigenous peoples at UNCED. A film was shown which had been made by a Cousteau film team, visiting a favela, or slum, in Rio de Janeiro. In one of many UNCED displays, a 'lie-o-meter' used Pinocchio's famous nose to depict a nation's alleged prevarication.

Captain Cousteau delivered a major lecture to the distinguished assembly of world leaders, delegates and journalists attending the United Nations Conference. We present the text in full.

Rio, June 5, 1992

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Two days ago, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was inaugurated. Whatever the difficulties encountered during the lengthy preparation of this Assembly, its importance was emphasized by President Fernando Collor de Mello when I visited him in Brasilia on December 11,1991. He said: 'We cannot permit ... Rio to be just one more conference ... to discuss the problem of the devastation of the planet. To make sure that the Conference will be a success, we must insist that heads of state come to this and be ready to discuss matters that we know are not easy to tackle.'

He was mentioning the problems of demography, of disparity between poor and rich countries, of climate changes, and of the threat to biodiversity.

I have had the opportunity, throughout 59 years of worldwide explorations, to witness and study two striking examples of ill-fated communities: Haiti and Easter Island, both victims of distressing ecological tragedies of our time. Easter Island has experienced the same uncontrolled development, which ended after 1,000 years of mishaps in the collapse of an original culture and the physical eradication of the islanders by a 'self-genocide.'

Haiti is terribly overpopulated: 7.5 million people on an exiguous and impoverished land. Six children per family, but fathers of eleven are not rare. High infant death rate, insufficient schooling, and misery due to ignorance, superstition and poor political management. Haitians, though, are beautiful, proud, intelligent, good-humored, and hardworking. But they have exhausted the marine resources of their narrow continental shelf. They have deforested, without precaution, two-thirds of their country and tropical rains have thereafter wiped out the soil, laying bare the ground rock and impeding agriculture for centuries to come. To cook their scanty meals, they continue to deforest, and turn wood into charcoal. We asked: 'What will you do when there is no wood left at all?" "That will be the end of the world! Yes, the end of the world!" they answered. Until then, the men of Haiti procreate, hoping that their male children will take care of their old fathers; and the women say, "I am not the one to decide how many children I will have."

The fuse connected to a demographic explosion is already burning. We have less than ten years to put it out. There should be a general mobilization to reverse the trend and to avoid the population big bang. But instead, there is a certain disarray about how to tackle such a giant threat.

Political changes will fail to resolve Haiti's tragedy, as this country will be poverty-stricken for many years. Maybe forever, because in certain cases environmental destruction may reach a point of no return.

In the seventh century A.D., as told by petroglyphs, two large outriggers landed on a virgin, lush and uninhabited tropical island; two hundred Polynesians—men, women and children—and pigs and hens landed on the beautiful beaches of Easter Island. They came from the Marquesas Islands, where they had been ostracized and chased after a tribal war.

For eight centuries after they settled, they cultivated, multiplied, and developed a unique civilization, a society divided into three castes: peasants, sculptors and priests. Their population reached the number of 70,000; famine, bloody revolts and social chaos brought about the total collapse of their society. When Dutch navigators landed at Easter Island in the seventeenth century, it was a barren, totally deforested piece of rock where a few hundred cannibals were hunting each other for survival. Easter Island's natural exuberance had expired under the load of too many consumers. All that remained were undecipherable tablets and proud statues, a stern warning to humankind of what will happen to Island Earth if humans do not strictly control their demography.

The fuse connected to a demographic explosion is already burning. We have less than ten years to put it out. There should be a general mobilization to reverse the trend and to avoid the 'population big bang.' But instead, there is a certain disarray about how to tackle such a giant threat.

Soon after World War II, the Club of Rome revealed the cause-and-effect relationship between the drain on nonrenewable resources and the effects of expanding demography combined with increasing living standards. Today, such organizations as the United Nations Development Program and the Worldwatch Institute constantly reassess the consequences on the Human Development Index. The HDI is based on life expectancy, literacy and income. But all of those factors are influenced by the quality of world management and mainly by the terrifying rate at which the global population increases. In spite of some hard-won sporadic improvements, the balance sheet is bleak: Some countries still have a life expectancy of only 40 years. Global illiteracy remains close to 40 percent. More than one billion people live at the absolute poverty level. Two billion human beings have a decreasing quality of life.

But today, population increase has become exponential. It is no longer the time to discuss the theories of Malthus. During my lifetime—80 years only—the world population has more than tripled, jumping from 1.7 billion in 1910 to 5.4 billion today. If nothing drastic is done, in another 80 years, in 2072, population will triple again, reaching the absurd figure of 16 billion human beings. Every six months, the equivalent of France (50 million) is added. Every ten years, there is a new China born in the poorest regions of our Earth. Let us face it: Whether the level-off figure is 18,16,14, or even 12 billion, it is unacceptable. Even if we found a way to feed this human tidal wave, it would be impossible to provide this multitude with decent living conditions. Surviving like rats is not what we should bequeath to our children and grandchildren.

"Surviving like rats is not what we should bequeath to our children and grandchildren."

In November 1989, in Ottawa, Barber Conable, then President of the World Bank, expressed his anxiety about the constraints these billions of new human beings will impose on the planet, and the foreseeable drop in the quality of life of men and women.

Five months ago, speaking at the United Nations Salas Memorial Lecture, Robert McNamara asked the basic question: "Is the increase in human numbers and its environmental and developmental ramifications a cause for concern?" After a thorough analysis of this crucial problem, he concluded that it is.

Meanwhile, freshwater supplies shrink, marshes and lagoons are drained dry. Acid rains and savage deforestation lead to destruction of entire ecosystems: It is estimated that about one million species of plants, insects, reptiles, fish, birds, and mammals have already been eliminated; almost 10 percent of all kinds of living creatures are extinct forever. The two fluids of life—hydrosphere and atmosphere—are equally threatened. In the air we breathe, the rates of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, of nitrogen oxide, of methane and freon increase dramatically, which may bring about the warming of the entire planet, the melting of glaciers and of ice caps, and finally a catastrophic rise of the ocean level.

A few months ago, at the initiative of their presidents, Sir Michael Atiyah and Dr. Frank Press, two of the most prestigious scientific communities of the world, the Royal Society of London and the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, published a statement in which one can read: "There is an urgent need to address economic activity, population growth and environmental protection as interrelated issues, and as crucial components affecting the sustainability of human society. The next 30 years may be crucial!" On March 19, I interviewed Dr. Press, who declared to my cameras: "Each additional person on Earth requires more resources, more food, more water; and each releases into the environment by-products that can affect the natural environment. We feel that unlimited growth of population means disaster and that science cannot rescue the world from the consequences of an unlimited population growth."

Thus, the first priority of a concerned human community is to avoid famines. In the 1960s, an American geneticist, Norman Borlaug, developed new breeds of wheat to increase the production of food. The "Green Revolution," a consequence of his research, saved hundreds of millions of people from starvation, mainly in India, Pakistan and China. In 1970, Dr. Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his memorable achievements. I discussed the future of farming technology with Dr. Borlaug in Geneva two weeks ago. "I call it the Population Monster," he said, "that makes it impossible to improve the quality of life of the poor countries. In my acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize, I said that, by improving the yield of wheat, rice and maize by a factor of three, I had provided the leaders of the world with a provision of 30 years to find solutions to the population problem. Today, they have wasted 22 years during which they did not even discuss the matter! With only a few years left before it will be too late, I warn them: There will not be another Green Revolution!"

To hearten public opinion, some technocrats spread a reassuring statement: "Don't worry! If we ever run short of resources, we will dig into our inexhaustible reserve: the sea." And actually, fishing enterprises have improved, in scope and in efficiency. From 20 million tons in 1950, the total catch of the world fisheries today reaches a ceiling of 90 to 100 million tons. But at what price! Bigger ships, devastating nets and traps, sonar and radar, and the unerring eyes of satellites spotting ocean temperature, tracking schools, revealing all spawning areas. But more than a reliable source of food for a hungry world, technology and larger fleets have only built a dangerous illusion: the myth of an inexhaustible sea.

How much food can fishing provide? The oceans cover 71 percent of the planet, but 92 percent of that is similar to a desert—which means that carbon production is less than 50 grams per square meter per year (man has nothing to do with this fact).

To start with, the global primary production (vegetable source of all animal forms) of the oceans is only half the primary production of land (55 billion compared to 115 billion tons). Second: The food chain is much more efficient on land than in the sea: Ten kilos of grass produce one kilo of cow or sheep or goat. But 10 tons of marine grass are needed to produce one kilo of tuna. Third: On land, we raise animals for food. In the sea, we hunt them (fishing is hunting). And as we already overfish, we have reduced fish stocks; overfishing is proven by the growing ratio of tonnage of ships versus the tonnage of fish. Fourth: The tonnage of catch is stable, but it is falsified. Twenty-seven percent of the catch is turned into fish flour for cattle! Fish to feed herbivores! Fish as fertilizer ... to feed grass! The official 97 million tons from the sea should be compared with 2 billion, 400 million tons from the land—a factor of 25. To sum up, the sea produces today a maximum of 35 grams per day per person, and this figure will drop to 10 grams per day per person if the population triples. Fifth: In fact, the prices rise faster for fish than for meat. And aquaculture has only been able to produce luxury food, like shrimp.

Conclusion: Not only are the resources from the sea negligible compared to agriculture, but we are already overexploiting, eating up the stocks to provide luxury food to the rich countries, which do not need it. If neither scientists, agronomists nor oceanographers can help solve the consequences of an exponential population growth, we should urgently find ways to fight Dr. Bourlaug's population monster, without resorting to any authoritarian measure. The demographic tsunami is everybody's business.

"In all the countries with an excessive birthrate, women are segregated, deprived of appropriate health care."

It is generally feared that obstacles to family planning are cultural (or spiritual), and as such, are impossible to get around. Facts prove the contrary. Italy, the country closest to the Vatican, has today the lowest natality in Europe and in the world; and Spain, also a Catholic country, is about the same case. The largest Muslim country, Indonesia, has developed an efficient action plan and now has a still-decreasing birthrate about one-third that of Kenya. Even the Voodoo priests are softening their stand. However, two formidable obstacles remain that must and can be overcome: the status of women and the insecurity of old age.

In all the countries with an excessive birthrate, women are segregated, deprived of appropriate health care; the rate of illiteracy among women is one-third higher than for men. Two examples of the importance of education of women:

South Yemen: Women's illiteracy: 95% Birthrate: 3.4%
Thailand: Women's illiteracy: 15% Birthrate: 1.3%

The same kind of proportionality exists between the birthrate and the percentage of GNP allocated to social security and eventually to retirement plans. Unfortunately, during the past 10 years in developing countries, the mean percentage of the national product allocated to health, social security and education has decreased by about 20 percent while defense expenditures have increased: Today, in less-favored nations, armies spend the same share of the budget as health and education combined, while this proportion is only 55 percent in the advanced nations.

A rough estimate of what an efficient plan would cost to provide drinking water to all and to implement the social promotion of women and decent security in old age amounts to 400 billion dollars a year, or about one-third of the aggregate global military budget. In a world of debts, deficits and armed conflicts, such a plan surely appears utopian. But the countdown has started, and future generations would not forgive us for having deliberately spoiled their last opportunity.

The capacity of our planet to sustain life—in other words, the habitability of Earth—is extremely difficult to assess. Temporary necessities or even simple temptations have unfortunately much more influence on the behavior of human beings than regards for the preservation of our heritage. Thus, developing nations, where, today, the only thing that develops is population, claim that the main problem is an equitable sharing of resources rather than overpopulation or environmental protection, while many ecologists from more favored nations cry shame when people in Asia or Africa deforest for survival.

This misunderstanding between rich and poor countries is becoming bitter and may lead to violence. In the Southern nations, the 20th century has generalized poverty and hunger, while in the North and the West, it has generated confusion: confusion between instruction and education, pleasure and joy, money and morality, tradition and innovation, individual risks and risks imposed on others, even on those yet unborn. Universities have become employment agencies; free enterprise is leading to scandalous inequalities; the reign of the Golden Calf, to whose law we submit, is putting the finishing touches on the assassination of morality, which no society has yet been able to do without.

Students are incited to despise tradition for the sake of innovation, while it is tradition that offers the most fertile ground for creativity. From this confusion, from this absence of internal discipline, emerges the "Me Society," whose byword is: "Everyone has the right to everything—including the superfluous—immediately."

In Africa, my heart broke to see little girls running ten kilometers to fetch a small pail of potable water instead of going to school. In Amazonia, intrigued by the children swarming around a cottage of stilts, I asked the master of the house how many children he had: "I don't know anymore," he said. "My wife knows, surely!" One look from these youngsters is enough to stir rebellion: Let us stop this delayed-action genocide! Let us cease thinking only of ourselves and reasoning only in the short term. Let us assure for the children to come the same rights that have been declared for their parents.

We are living in an interminable succession of absurdities imposed by the myopic logic of short-term thinking: the population big bang, the North-South divorce, the climatic changes of all sorts, the elimination of thousands of species, the new dictatorship of materialism. All these evils must be cured urgently, and the only medicine is a recourse to Utopia. In a remarkable speech at the Ateneo Veneto on April 6, 1990, Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, said: "Since the Renaissance, one has often ascertained that today's utopias are the realities of tomorrow.... Utopia is the necessity to get over and break the barriers of the established order."

I wish that at this Rio Conference, heads of state and their delegates realize the urgency of drastic, unconventional decisions. You have an extraordinary opportunity to change the course of the world .... but only if you decide to challenge the huge problems with radical solutions. The people of the world are anxiously awaiting a new light. This is our responsibility, as we hold in our hands the future of tomorrow's exacting generations.

Reprinted from Calypso Log for August 1992

GUEST EDITORIAL:

LA VERITABLE BASE DE L' UNITE HUMAINE

On parle beaucoup d'unité en ce monde si divisé ce qui peut paraître paradoxal. Mais ce n'est nullement un paradoxe pour ceux ayant constaté l'existence d'un courant spirituel qui influence fortement les personnes possédant un psychisme ouvert, sensible et réceptif.

Des hommes et des femmes suffisamment purifiés et doués d'une qrande sensibilité psychique sont donc perméables à des courants des forces provenant du monde spirituel. On peut le nier, le discuter intellectuellment; mais le fait est bien réel pour nous.

Ainsi ces hommes et ces femmes parlent, écrivent propagent autour d'eux cette idée que l'Humanité doit réaliser son unité sous peine de se détruire elle-même.

Cette tendance à l'unité qui en dépit des apparences contraires, caracterise le monde moderne est un signe évident qu'il y a une pression très forte agissant sur le psychisme humain. Cette pression est d'origine spirituelle el divine. Elle peut prendre differents aspects et utiliser ces canaux d'expression très variés. C'est ainsi que des hommes devlennent soudainement inspirés createurs et dynamiques dans leur action; une force spirituelle a fait irruption dans leur être intérieur et les aide puissament.

Si tous les spiritualistes de la Terre s'ouvraient à ces forces spirituelles el divines, il y aurait un changement certain heureux dans le cours des évènements. Ils joueraient à l'insu de ceux qui dirigent les nations, un rôle determinant dans les évènements mondiaux. Ils pourraient être la Phalange Sacrée menant le bon combat pour le triomphe du Divin sur la Terre. Ils seraient les sauveurs du monde, les reconciliateurs, les pacificateurs, les créateurs tant attendus d'ordre et d'harmonie animés d un réel esprit d'unité.

Et comment réaliserons-nous cet esprit d'unité? · *Voici: Il faut que chaque spiritualiste se considère désormais omme un centre, un foyer individuel d'où rayonneront ces forces spirituelles et divines, dynamiques et créatrices, issues d'une même Source increéée et infinie.*

... S'ouvrir à ces forces c'est s'ouvrir au Créateur lui- même à sa lumière, à son insondable Sagesse, à son Amour; c'est transformer sa vie profondement, c'est la purifier de toutes les souillures de l'égoisme séparateur, de toutes les corruptions; c'est se libérer de tout ce qui est négatif, stérile, routinier; c'est de couvrir des horizons nouveaux infiniment variés; c'est prendre conscience d'un monde encore inexploré: ce monde intérieur psychique et spirituel sans lequel le monde extérieur ne pourrait exister.

L'Unité Humaine est à ce prix. Elle dépend absolument de cette transformation intérieure, de cette révolution du Réel dont parle un instructeur contemporain; révolution non sanglante et non violente qui est la fin du règne du "moi" égocentrique, de l'égo séparé et isolé au sein de sa conscience de soi limité. C'est aussi l'envahissement progressif de la conscience humaine enfin liberée de tout ce qui le conditionne et l'enchaine à des fausses valeurs, par une Presence dont on peut seulement dire qu'elle est l'épanouissement sans cesse renouvelé de la Vie Créatrice et Divine. Ici parvenu à cette étape de son développement spirituel, l'homme ne peut plus douter de l'éxistence de la realité du Divin. Il le réalise en lui-même dans la conscience d'une plénitude de vie si intense, si majestueuse dans son infinité qu'aucun mot du langage humain ne sairait le décrire.

Ce n'est que parvenu à cet état que l'homme réalise pleinement cette vérité. L'Humanité est Une, ayant son origine et sa fin suprème dans le Dieu vivant qui réside dans le coeur de toutes les créatures. La triple Unité humaine cosmique et divine est pour lui une vérité vivante qu'il éprouve expérimenté dans sa conscience liberée et transformée.

C'est à une telle réalisation que nous convions tous les spiritualistes sincères. Ce n'est que de cette manière qu'ils mettront fin à toutes leurs divisions, leur rivalité de groupes, de sectes, de petites chapelles; et ce n'est qu'ainsi qu'ils aideront l'humanité à sortir de son impasse actuelle.

Que cet article et ceux qui suivront soient considérés aussi comme des appels lancés par ceux qui ont déjà réalisé la conscience nouvelle, celle du monde de Demain: la conscience de l'Unité.

This editorial is reprinted from a French publication entitled L'UNITE HUMAINE, *published by a group called* L'ALLIANCE UNIVERSELLE, *which describes itself as a "global federal movement with a spiritual base but without dogmas and without particular intransigent and obligatory credos; independent of all political parties and all religious or philosophical organizations, proposing to coordinate the efforts of diverse good wills of the Earth...(translated)." At this time, the organization may be addressed at the Comité Directeur Mondial de l'Alliance*

Universelle, 73, avenue de la Résistance, 83000 TOULON (FRANCE). I hope I've rendered the French fairly accurately, for the sake of our French subscribers! The French words and sentiments evoked such linguistic melody for me, I couldn't bear to translate it! Hope that doesn't offend you. J'aime beaucoup le français! If you would like a translation, write and ask me, and I'll struggle through one for you - gratis!

TRIBAL WISDOM

from his book *Millennium*

by David Maybury-Lewis

Is it too late for us to reclaim the benefits of tribal living?

Tribal people hold endless fascination for us moderns. We imagine them as exotics trapped in a lyrical past, or as charming anachronisms embarking on the inevitable course toward modernity. What few of us realize is that tribal peoples have not tried (and failed) to be like us, but have actually chosen to live differently. It is critical that we examine the roads they took that we did not; only then can we get a clear insight into the choices we ourselves make and the price we pay for them—alienation, loneliness, disintegrating families, ecological destruction, spiritual famishment. Only then can we consider the possibility of modifying some of those choices to enrich our lives.

In studying tribal societies, as I have for 30 years, we learn that there is no single "tribal" way of life—I use the word here as a kind of shorthand to refer to small-scale, preindustrial societies that live in comparative isolation and manage their affairs without a central authority such as the state. But however diverse, such societies do share certain characteristics that make them different from "modern" societies. By studying the dramatic contrasts between these two kinds of societies, we see vividly the consequences of modernization and industrialization. Modernization has changed our thinking about every facet of our lives, from family relationships to spirituality to our importance as individuals. Has ours been the road best traveled?

Strange relations

The heart of the difference between the modern world and the traditional one is that in traditional societies people are a valuable resource and the interrelations between them are carefully tended; in modern society things are the valuables and people are all too often treated as disposable.

Weyewa: Before celebrating with a feast, more than 400 men from the Weyema tribe of Sumba, Indonesia, drag a 25-ton rock to the tomb of the village patriarch's father. The stone pullers look on this as part of the tribe's economic system, which is based on the exchange of gifts. A rich person here is not someone who has accumulated wealth or goods but someone to whom a large network of people is beholden. In contrast to modern societies, gifts are not meant to be equivalent—an equivalent counter-gift would threaten the tribe's endless cycle of reciprocity and mutual obligation.

In the modern world we shroud our interdependency in an ideology of independence. We focus on individuals, going it alone in the economic sphere, rather than persons, interconnected in the social sphere. As French anthropologist Marcel Mauss put it, 'It is our Western societies that have recently turned man into an economic animal.' What happened?

A truly revolutionary change—a social revolution centering on the rights of the individual—swept Western Europe during the Renaissance and eventually came to dominate and define the modem world. While traditional societies had denounced individualism as anti-social, in Westem Europe a belief in the rights and dignity of the individual slowly came to be regarded as the most important aspect of society itself.

In traditional societies, people are valuable; in modern societies, things are the valuables.

The glorification of the individual, this focus on the dignity and rights of the individual, this severing of the obligations to kin and community that support and constrain the individual in traditional societies—all this was the sociological equivalent of splitting the atom. It unleashed the human energy and creativity that enabled people to make extraordinary technical advances and to accumulate undreamed-of wealth.

But we have paid a price for our success. The ever-expanding modern economy is a driven economy, one that survives by creating new needs so that people will consume more. Ideally, under the mechanics of this system, people should have unlimited needs so that the economy can expand forever, and advertising exists to convince them of just that.

The driven economy is accompanied by a restless and driven society. In the United States, for example the educational system teaches children to be competitive and tries to instill in them the hunger for personal achievement. As adults, the most driven people are rewarded by status. Other human capabilities—for instance, kindness, generosity, patience, tolerance, cooperation, compassion—all the qualities one might wish for in one's family and friends, are literally undervalued: Any job that requires such talents usually has poor pay and low prestige.

The tendency of modern society to isolate the individual is nowhere more clearly evident than in the modern family. In the West we speak of young people growing up, leaving their parents, and "starting a family." To most of the world, including parts of Europe, this notion seems strange. Individuals do not start families, they are born into them and stay in them until death or even beyond. In those societies you cannot leave your family without becoming a social misfit, a person of no account.

When the modern system works, it provides a marvelous release for individual creativity and emotion; when it does not, it causes a lot of personal pain and social stress. It is, characteristically, an optimistic system, hoping for and betting on the best. In contrast, traditional societies have settled for more cautious systems, designed to make life tolerable and to avoid the worst. Americans, in their version of the modern family, are free to be themselves at the risk of ultimate loneliness. In traditional family systems the individual may be suffocated but is never unsupported. Is there a middle way?

Finding that middle way is not a problem that tribal societies have to face, at least not unless they find their way of life overwhelmed by things beyond their control. They normally get on with the business of rearing children against a background of culture which tells them what should be done and how, which allows them to be more relaxed about what is happening. Children may spend as much time as they wish to do and choose what they do with their parents, or, as in the Xavante tribe of central Brazil, they may wander around in a flock that is vaguely supervised by whichever adults happen to be nearby. As soon as Xavante babies are old enough to toddle, they attach themselves to one of the eddies of children that come and go in the village. There they are socialized by their peers. The older kids keep an eye on the younger ones and teach them their place in the pecking order. Of course there are squabbles and scraps, and one often sees a little child who has gotten the worst of it wobbling home and yelling furiously. The child's parents never do what parents in our society often do— go out and remonstrate with the children in an attempt to impose some kind of adult justice (often leaving the children with a burning sense of unfairness). Instead they simply comfort the child and let her return to the fold as soon as her bruised knee or battered ego permits. At the same time, there is never any bullying among the Xavante children who are left to police themselves.

The Xavante system represents an informal dilution of parents' everyday responsibilities. In many societies these responsibilities are formally transferred to other relatives. In the Pacific Islands, for example, it is quite common for children to be raised by their parents' kin. Among the Trobriand Islanders, this is seen as useful for the child, since it expands his or her network of active kin relationships without severing ties to the biological parents. If children are unhappy, they can return to their true parents. If they are contented, they remain with their adoptive parents until adulthood.

Xavante: How do children approaching adulthood know who they are? Western societies offer maturity piecemeal to their growing children —and prolong the adolescent period, which is often as confusing and painful for the parents as for the kids. But in tribal societies like the Xavante in Brazil, the transition to maturity is clearly marked with great ceremony. Initiation rituals for teens are intended to provoke anxiety, for they act out the death and rebirth of the initiate. The old self "dies" and the initiate is separated from society; while an initiate is in a limbo-like stage, he or she is taught the mysteries of the society. Instruction is enhanced by fear, deprivation and the atmosphere of awe created by the teachers. Only then is the initiate reborn as an adult.

Tribal societies also differ from the modern in their approach to raising teenagers. The tribal transition to maturity is made cleanly and is marked with great ceremony. In Western societies families dither over their often resentful young, suggesting that they may be old enough but not yet mature enough, mature enough but not yet secure enough, equivocating and putting adolescents through an obstacle course that keeps being prolonged.

Tribal initiation rites have always held a special interest for outside observers, who have been fascinated by their exotic and especially by their sexual aspects. It is the pain and terror of such initiations that make the deepest impression, and these are most frequently inflicted on boys, who are in the process of being taken out of the women's world and brought into that of the men. Some Australian Aboriginal groups peel the penis like a banana and cut into the flesh beneath the foreskin. Some African groups cut the face and forehead of the initiate in such a way as to leave deep scars.

Circumcision is, of course, the commonest of all initiation procedures. Its effect on the boy is, however, intensified in some places by an elaborate concern with his fortitude during the operation. The Maasai of East Africa, whose *moran* or warriors are world famous as epitomes of courage and bravado, closely watch a boy who is being circumcised for the slightest sign of cowardice. Even an involuntary twitch could make him an object of condemnation and scorn.

Their tribal initiation gives girls a strong sense of the powers of women.

Initiation rituals are intended to provoke anxiety. They act out the death and rebirth of the initiate. His old self dies, and while he is in limbo he learns the mysteries of his society—instruction that is enhanced by fear and deprivation and by the atmosphere of awe that his teachers seek to create. In some societies that atmosphere is enhanced by the fact that the teachers are anonymous, masked figures representing the spirits. The lesson is often inscribed unforgettably on his body as well as in his mind. Later (the full cycle of ceremonies may last weeks or even months) he is reborn as an adult, often literally crawling between the legs of his sponsor to be reborn of man into the world of men.

Girls' initiation ceremonies are as dramatically marked in some societies as those of boys. Audrey Richards' account of the *chisungu,* a month-long initiation ceremony among the Bemba of Zambia, describing the complex ritual that does not so much add to the girl's practical knowledge as inculcate certain attitudes—a respect, for age, for senior women and men, for the mystical bonds between husband and wife, for what the Bemba believe to be the dangerous potentials of sex, fire, and blood. The initiate learns the secret names of things and the songs and dances known only to women. She is incorporated into the group of women who form her immediate community, since this is a society that traces descent in the female line and a husband moves to his wife's village when they marry. Western writers tend to assume that it is more important for boys to undergo separation from their mothers as they mature than it is for girls. But the Bemba stress that mothers must surrender their daughters in the *chisungu* to the community at large (and to the venerable mistress of ceremonies in particular) as part of a process through which they will eventually gain sons-in-law.

The ceremony Richards observed for the initiation of three girls included 18 separate events, some 40 different pottery models (shaped for the occasion and destroyed immediately afterward), nearly a hundred songs, and numerous wall paintings and dances, all used to instruct the girls in their new status. All of this represents a large investment of time and resources. The initiation gives girls a strong sense of the solidarity and powers of women in a society that also stresses male authority and female submissiveness.

Aborigine: Australia's Aborigines live in accordance with "the dreaming," ritual knowledge traditionally passed from generation to generation within a kin group that is responsible for the care of a certain territory and its associated animals and songs. This physical and spiritual attachment to the land is losing ground as young Aborigines, faced with unemployment and poverty, are moving to towns and turning their backs on the old ways. And while there has been some success in recognizing Aboriginal land rights, their ancestral lands are still under threat. One Aboriginal area, Cape York in Queensland, has been earmarked for a space center.

Ever since the influential work of Margaret Mead, there has been a tendency in the West to assume that, if growing up is less stressful in tribal societies, it is because they are less puritanical about sex. The modem world has, however, undergone a sexual revolution since Mead was writing in the 1930s and 1940s, and it does not seem to have made growing up much easier. I think that, in our preoccupation with sex, we miss the point. Take the case of tribal initiations. They not only make it clear to the initiates (and to the world at large) that they are now mature enough to have sex and to have children; the clarity also serves to enable the individual to move with a fair degree of certainty through clearly demarcated stages of life.

A moral economy

Since earliest times, the exchange of gifts has been the central mechanism through which human beings relate , to one another. The reason is that the essence of a gift is obligation. A person who gives a gift compels the recipient either to make a return gift or to reciprocate in some other way. Obligation affects the givers as well. It is not entirely up to them whether or when to bestow a gift. Even in the modern world, which prides itself on its pragmatism, people are expected to give gifts on certain occasions— at weddings, at childbirth, at Christmas, and so on. People are expected to invite others to receive food and drink in their houses and those so invited are expected to return the favor.

Nyinba: Societies the world over are preoccupied with the stability of the family. Among the Nyinba of Nepal, a woman is expected to have a number of husbands at the same time; typically, a woman marries a group of brothers and moves into their household. Passionate attachment to any one of them is frowned upon, for it risks alienating the others and threatens to break up the family. This arrangement can be seen as an adaptation to a land where resources are limited—family property does not have to be divided up when all brothers are married to the same woman. But the Nyinba tolerate a variety of marriage arrangements including monogamy and polygyny (men marrying several women). Their tolerance contrasts sharply with the Western insistence on monogamy as the only "natural" family arrangement.

In traditional societies, it is gifts that bond people to one another and make society work. It follows that in such societies a rich person is not somebody who accumulates wealth in money and goods but rather somebody who has a large network of people beholden to him. Such networks are the instrument through which prominent people can demonstrate their prestige. They are also the safety net that sees an individual through the crises of life.

In modern societies these networks have shrunk, just as the family continues to shrink. There are fewer and fewer people to whom we feel obligated and, more ominously, fewer and fewer who feel obligated to us. When we think of a net, when our politicians speak of it, we refer to arrangements made by abstract entities—the state, the corporation, the insurance company, the pension fund, entities we would not dream of giving presents to; entities we hope will provide for us (and fear they will not).

Traditional societies operate a moral economy, that is, an economy permeated by personal and moral considerations. In such a system, exchanges of goods in the 'market' are not divorced from the personal relationships between those who exchange. On the contrary, the exchanges define those relationships. People who engage in such transactions select exchange partners who display integrity and reliability so that they can go back to them again and again. Even when cash enters such an economy, it does not automatically transform it. People still look for just prices, not bargain prices, and the system depends on trust and interdependence. In traditional societies the motto is 'seller beware,' for a person who gouges or shortchanges will become a moral outcast, excluded from social interaction with other people.

An ecology of mind

The sense of disconnection so characteristic of modern life affects not only the relations between people but equally importantly the relations between people and their environment. As a result, we may be gradually making the planet uninhabitable. The globe is warming up and is increasingly polluted. We cannot take fresh air or clean water for granted anymore. Even our vast oceans are starting to choke on human garbage. The rain forests are burning. The ozone layer is being depleted at rates that constantly exceed our estimates.

How have we come to this? A hundred years ago science seemed to hold such promising possibilities. But the scientific advances of the 19th century were built on the notion that human beings would master nature and make it produce more easily and plentifully for them. Medieval Christianity also taught that human beings, although they might be sinners, were created in God's image to have dominion over this earth. Whether human dominion was guaranteed by the Bible or by science, the result was the same—the natural world was ours to exploit.

Gift exchanges form the safety net that sees an individual through life's crises.

Tribal societies, by contrast, have always had a strong sense of the interconnectedness of things on this earth and beyond. For example, human beings have, for the greater part of the history of our species on this earth, lived by hunting and gathering. Yet peoples who lived by hunting and gathering did not—and do not

Gabra: the Gabra, nomadic camel herders in Kenya's Chalbi Desert have been told by experts dating back to British colonial rule how to manage their arid environment. Recent studies, however, have shown the Gabra to be extremely adept at anticipating and dealing with adverse conditions such as drought or overgrazed land since their survival depends on the health of the environment. The Gabra's survival as a people also rests on their "camel bank": The constant lending of camels among their own people and even outsiders has strengthened ties that endure for generations. A Gabra elder explains that "even the milk from our own animals does not belong to us. We must give to those who need it, for a poor man shames us all."

to this day consider themselves the lords of creation. On the contrary, they are more likely to believe in (and work hard to maintain) a kind of reciprocity between human beings and the species they are obliged to hunt for food.

Makuna: The Makuna people in Colombia believe that human beings, animals and all of nature are parts of the same One. Animals and fish live in their own communities, which are just like human communities, with their chiefs, their shamans, their dance houses, their songs, and their material possessions. When human people dance in this world, the shaman invites the animal people to dance in theirs. If humans do not dance and shamans do not offer spirit food to the animal people then the animals will die out and there will be no more game left in the world. For the Makuna, the typical Western split between nature and culture, humans and animals, dissolves.

The reciprocity between hunter and hunted is elaborately expressed in the ideas of the Makuna Indians of southeastern Colombia. The Makuna believe that human beings, animals, and all of nature are parts of the same One. Their ancestors were fish people who came ashore along the rivers and turned into people. Out of their bodies or by their actions these ancestors created everything in the world, the hills and forests, the animals and the people. They carved out river valleys by pushing their sacred musical instruments in front of them.

People, animals, and fish all share the same spiritual essence and so, the Makuna say, animals and fish live in their own communities, which are just like human communities. They have their chiefs, their shamans, their dance houses, birth houses, and 'waking up houses' (places where they originally came into being as species). They have their songs and dances and their material possessions. Above all, animals and fish are just like humans because they wear ritual ornaments, consume spirit foods coca, snuff, and the hallucinogenic brew called *yage*—and use the sacred *yurupari* instruments in their ceremonies. When shamans blow over coca, snuff, and other spirit foods during human ceremonies, they are offering them to the animal people. When human beings dance in this world, the shaman invites the animal people to dance in theirs. If humans do not dance and shamans do not offer spirit food to the animal people, the animals will die out and there will be no more game left in this world.

Thus when the fish are spawning, they are actually dancing in their birth houses. That is why it is particularly dangerous to eat fish that have been caught at the spawning places, for then one eats a person who is ceremonially painted and in full dance regalia. A human being who does this or enters a fish house by mistake will sicken and die, for his soul will be carried away to the houses of the fish people.

It is clear that Makuna beliefs have specific ecological consequences. The sacredness of salt licks and fish-spawning places, the careful reciprocity between humans and their fellow animals and fish, all mediated by respected shamans, guarantee that the Makuna manage their environment and do not plunder it. The Swedish anthropologist Kaj Arhem, an authority on the Makuna, describes their ecological practices and cosmological speculations as an 'ecosophy,' where the radical division between nature and culture, humans and animals—so characteristic of Western thought—dissolves.

Tribal people maintain a reciprocity with the species they must hunt for food.

Arhem suggests that we need an ecosophy of our own, imbued with moral commitment and emotional power, if we are to protect the resources on which we depend and ensure not only our own survival but also that of our fellow creatures on this earth.

We, on the other hand, tend to forget our environment except when we want to extract wealth from it or use it as the backdrop for a scenic expedition. Then we take what we want. There is no compact, none of the reciprocity so characteristic of tribal societies. For the most part we mine the earth and leave it, for we do not feel we belong to it. It belongs to us. This rootlessness and the waste that goes with it are particularly shocking to traditional societies.

The Indians of the western United States were outraged by the way in which the invaders of their territories squandered the resources that they themselves used so sparingly. The Indians on the plains lived off the buffalo, killing only as many as they needed and using every bit of the dead animal. They ate the meat, made tents and clothes from the hides, and used the bones to make arrow straighteners, bows, mallets, even splints for setting fractures. They made butter from the marrow fat and cords from the sinews. When white buffalo hunters came, it was more than an invasion. It was sacrilege. These men slaughtered the herds with their powerful rifles, often taking only the tongue to eat and leaving the rest of the animal to rot.

Huichol: In the Western world, the urge to transcend ordinary experience and the accompanying idea of seeking to be at one with the universe are impulses we tolerate only at the fringes of society. Yet, after banishing mystical experiences from our mainstream culture, many of us feel spiritually empty without it. Every year Mexico's Huichol Indians go on a pilgrimage to Wirikuta, retracing the steps of their ancestors so that they can "find their lives." They spend many nights in prayer, dancing, chanting, and fasting. Then the shaman leads the pilgrims on the sacred hunt for peyote. The pilgrims yearn to lose themselves in a state of fusion with the universe and their fellow humans; yet they fear it, too, for they are tempted to linger in ecstasy, and if they were not strong enough to return, their souls would be severed from their bodies and they would die.

The deep sadness of the Indians over this slaughter was expressed in a speech attributed to Chief Seattle, after whom the city of Seattle is named, believed to have been delivered in 1854 to an assembly of tribes preparing to sign away their lands under duress to the white man. Some contend the speech was actually written by a Texas speechwriter in 1971. Whatever their origin, these moving words convey an environmental and spiritual ethic that most tribal people share. They speak as much to us about our own predicament as they did to Chief Seattle's fellow chiefs about their defeated civilization. 'What is man without the beasts?' he asked. 'If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected.... We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of the land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his fathers' graves behind, and he does not care. He kidnaps the earth from his children. He does not care. His fathers' graves and his children's birthright are forgotten. He treats his mother, the earth, and his brother, the sky, as things to be bought, plundered, sold like sheep or bright beads. His appetite will devour the earth and leave behind only a desert.'

Touching the timeless

Modern society is intensely secular. Even those who regret this admit it. Social theorists tend to assume that modernization is itself a process of secularization that has not only undermined people's religious beliefs but has also deprived them of their spirituality. In the industrial nations of the West many of the people who believe in God do not expect to come into close contact with the divine, except after death—and some of them are not too sure about it even then.

Indeed, it seems that those who live in the secular and industrialized West are already searching for to fill the vacuum in their lives left by 'organic' religion and the numbing delights of mass society live in a world that prides itself on its modernity hungry for wholeness, hungry for meaning. At the same time it is a world that marginalizes the very impulses that might fill this void. The pilgrimage toward the divine, the openness to knowledge that transcends ordinary experience, the very idea of feeling at one with the universe are impulses we tolerate only at the fringes of our society.

It seems that we denigrate our capacity to die and so condemn ourselves to live in a disenchanted world. Shorn of the knowledge that we are part of something greater than ourselves, we also lose the sense of responsibility that comes with it. It is this connectedness that tribal societies cherish. Yet for modern society, this is a bond we cannot bring ourselves to seek. But if we do not listen to other traditions, do not even listen to our inner selves, then what will the future hold for our stunted and overconfident civilization?

The tightrope of power

Meanwhile, this civilization of ours, at once so powerful

People, not states, make a nation

Tribal nations seek self-determination and new forms of governance

EASTERN EUROPE'S REVOLTS AND THE UNRAVELING OF YUGOSLAVIA AND the Soviet Union last year are part of a worldwide call to redefine the relationship of the state to the nations within them.

There are about five thousand nations in the world today. What makes each a nation is that its people share a language, culture, territorial base, and political organization and history. The Kayapo Indians are but one nation within the state called Brazil. The Penan people of Sarawak are but one nation within the state called Malaysia. To the people of nations, group identity matters more than state affiliation. The five thousand nations have existed for hundreds, even thousands of years. The majority of the world's 190 states have been around only since World War II. Very few nations have ever been given a choice when they were made part of a state.

Most of the shooting wars in the world today are being fought between nations and the states that claim to represent them. With very few exceptions, these wars are not about the independence of nations, but rather their level of autonomy: who controls the rights to resources (land, water, minerals, trees), who provides local security, who determines the policies that affect language, laws, and cultural and religious rights.

Nearly all the international debt accumulated by African states, and nearly half of all other Third World debt, comes from the purchase of weapons by states to fight their own citizens. Most of the world's 12 million refugees are the offspring of such conflicts as are most of the 100 million internally displaced people who have been uprooted from their homelands. Most of the world's famine victims are nation peoples who are being starved by states that attempt to assimilate them while appropriating their food supplies. Most of the destructive colonization, resettlement, and villagization programs are sponsored by states, in the name of progress, in order to bring nation peoples to their knees.

A vicious circle forms. The appropriation of a nation's resources leads to conflict, conflict leads to weapons purchases, weapons purchases lead to debt, and debt leads to the appropriation of more resources—and the cycle intensifies.

As the Cold War ends, new relationships will evolve, not only between the states of the West and those of Eastern Europe, but also among their allies and non-aligned states throughout the globe. With Third World countries no longer looked on as proxies in an ideological war, the U.S. and other Western powers are pulling back on aid. That means cutting the umbilical cords of Third World elites. The consequent weakening of their power may unleash more struggles between states and nations within them who sense an opportunity to win more control over their futures.

Yet it is clearer now than in recent decades that cultural identity is alive and well. In Africa, for example, to justify dictatorships and one-party rule elites and foreign interests have long proclaimed the evils of tribalism. Lately, some self-described "liberators for life" have apparently concluded that they only survive by opening up their political system. Dictators throughout Africa have recently moved to sit with opposition parties and elections. But simply allowing tribes to form political parties won't necessarily relieve pressures, because it won't change the fact that these are nations within states. There has been intriguing talk in Uganda of a confederation of tribes, based on the League of Iroquois, where local power would be left to the tribes and state politics would be decided by a joint council in which each tribe, regardless of size, has an equal vote. Under such a system, larger tribes are likely to resent not being able to wield proportional power. Yet this idea does address the vulnerability of small nations, which insist that they have the right to exist, as long as they do not deny others those same rights.

If nations and states are to find a peaceful coexistence, a system of decentralized federalism will have to evolve. By this I mean a political system that is built from the bottom up, one that gives autonomy and power to nation peoples, who in turn empower the state to act on their behalf.

Beyond this guiding principle there is no one model. Weak states with strong nations may break themselves

into new states. Newly independent nations, after trying to make a go of it for a while, may decide it is to their advantage to be part of a larger political unit. Many nations may use independence as a negotiating stance and settle for more local control within a state. To date, because the political processes in most states are not open, the only way nations have been able to push for their rights is to take them by force. The next 20 years are likely to be bloody if the world cannot find a new and better way to answer the demands of its now emboldened nations.

—Jason W. Clay
Mother Jones

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and so insecure, rolls like a juggernaut over societies that have explored the very solutions that might help us save ourselves. We do so in the name of progress, insisting all too often that we offer science, truth, plenty, and social order to peoples who lack these things. Yet the contrast between tribal societies and the centralized states that prey on them is not one of order and disorder, violence and peace. It is instead a contrast between societies in which no one has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force and others in which rights are vested in a state. The 20th century has become one of the bloodiest in history, not only because of the wars between countries employing weapons of mass destruction but also because modern technology had been used by ruthless rulers to cow their own subjects. Hitler and Stalin are only the most notorious examples of dictators who directed violence against their own people in the name of the state. There are literally scores of shooting wars going on at the moment, most of them between states and their own subjects.

The state guarantees order, or is supposed to. Force, the monopoly of the government, is applied massively but, once the system is in place, relatively invisibly. Its victims are hidden in concentration camps or banished to Siberias. In many places today, the victims simply disappear.

It seems that people will often acquiesce in despotism for fear of anarchy. Recent history seems to indicate that the most advanced countries are more afraid of anarchy than they are of oppression. The Russians, whose whole history is a struggle to create order on the open steppes of Eurasia, have a fear of disorder (which they call *беспорыадок* (*besporyadok*), the condition of not being 'lined up') that has frequently led them to accept tyranny. At the other extreme, the United States, whose whole history is a determination to avoid despotism, allows more internal chaos than most other industrial nations. It values individual freedom to the point of allowing private citizens to own arsenals of weapons and puts up with a rate of interpersonal violence that would be considered catastrophic in other countries.

It seems that human beings are everywhere searching for the right balance between the mob and the dictator, between chaos and tyranny, between the individual and society. Industrial societies give a monopoly of power to the state in exchange for a guarantee of peace. We take this social order for granted to the extent that we tend to assume that there is anarchy and perpetual warfare in tribal societies. What we do not realize is that such societies are acutely conscious of the fragility of the social order and of the constant effort needed to maintain it. Paradoxically, the people who live in societies that do not have formal political institutions are more political than those who do since it is up to each individual to make sure that the system works, indeed to ensure that the system continues to exist at all. Tribal people avoid the perils of anarchy only through constant and unremitting effort.

Elijah Harper, an Ojibwa-Cree who is a member of parliament in the Canadian province of Manitoba, contrasted the democratic procedures of the native Canadians he represented with those of the Canadian government that was trying to push through a revision of Canada's constitution. The new constitution was designed to respond to Quebec's demand to be considered a distinct society within Canada, with appropriate protection for its own language and culture. Harper used parliamentary procedure to block the constitutional change, on the grounds that native Canadians had been asking for similar consideration for years without getting a hearing. A new round of discussions concerning the revision of Canada's constitution is now taking place and this time the rights of Canada's 'first nations,' the aboriginal peoples, are also on the agenda.

The Canadian crisis makes clear what is only dimly perceived in other countries, namely that the destiny of the majority in any state is intimately linked to the fate of its minorities. The failure of the first attempt to change their constitution has forced Canadians to think about what kind of society they want theirs to be. These are the same questions that the Aborigines are trying to put on the Australian agenda and that the Indians are forcing Brazilians to think about as they protest against the rape of Amazonian regions.

Navajo: Tribal societies, if they are not deprived of their lands and their way of making a living, can make their way in the modern world while coexisting within larger political units. The Navajo, for example, have a very strong sense of themselves and their culture, which they have fought hard to maintain under adverse circumstances. But the cultural survival of most tribal societies in the world will require the rest of us to think in different ways about living with our fellow humans. A world that is willing to embrace tolerance and pluralism can ensure the survival not only of traditional peoples but also of our own.

It is not only in authoritarian states that questions arise about how people within a state are allowed to go about their business. The dramatic events in Eastern Europe, however, have led some people to think so. Once the heavy hand of Communist dictatorship was lifted, the nations of Eastern Europe started to unravel. Old ethnic loyalties surfaced and ethnic rivalries threaten to dismember one nation after another. The problem in Eastern Europe is not that it is made up of more peoples than states, but rather that the states have not been successful in working out political solutions that could enable those peoples to live together amicably. But neither do democratic regimes find it easy to create more imaginative solutions that allow diverse groups of people to live together.

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The reason for this failure is that such solutions require us to have a different idea of the state, a kind of new federalism, which, after the manner of the League of the Iroquois, permits each people in the nation to keep its council fire alight. This requires more than rules; it requires commitment. The Great Law of the Iroquois was remarkable because it was a constitution that had the force of a religion. People were willing, indeed eager, to subscribe to it because they saw it and revered it as the source of peace. Is it too much to hope that in a world riven with ethnic conflict we might search for political solutions more energetically than we have in the past? That we will not continue to expect strong states to iron out ethnicity, even if it means wiping out the 'ethnics'? A new federalism is in our own interest, for it offers the hope of peace and the prospect of justice. Nations that trample on the rights of the weak are likely to end up trampling on everybody's rights. As we wring our hands over the fate of tribal peoples in the modern world, we would do well to remember John Donne's words: 'Never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.'

Serious consideration of tribal ways of life should lead us to think carefully and critically about our own. What would it take for us to try to live in harmony with nature or to rehumanize our economic systems? How can we mediate between the individual and the family, between genders and generations? Should we strive for a less fragmented view of physical reality or of our place in the scheme of things? These questions revolve around wholeness and harmony, around tolerance and pluralism.

The answers are still emerging, but they too are variations on a grand theme that can be summed up in E.M. Forster's famous phrase: 'Only connect.' The project for the new millennium will be to re-energize civil society, the space between the state and the individual where those habits of the heart that socialize the individual and humanize the state flourish.

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REPRINTS:

GREENS AND LIBERTARIANS

The Yin and Yang of our Political Future

by Dan Sullivan

Over the past three decades, people have become dissatisfied with both major parties, and two new minor parties are showing promise of growth and success. They are the Libertarian Party and the Green Party. These are not the only new parties, but they are the only ones that promise to attract people from across the political spectrum. Most other small parties are either clearly to the left of the Democrats or to the right of the Republicans. Such parties would have a place in a system that accommodates multiple parties, but are doomed to failure in a two-party system.

The Libertarian Party is made up mostly of former conservatives who object to the Republican Party's penchant for militarism and its use of government to entrench powerful interests and shield them from market forces. The Green Party is made up mostly of former liberals who object to the Democratic Party's penchant for centralized bureaucracy and its frequent hypocritical disregard for natural systems of ecological balance, ranging from the human metabolism and the family unit to the ecology of the planet.

Both minor parties attempt to adhere to guidelines that are much clearer than those of either major party. Libertarians focus on rights of individuals to control their own lives, limited only by the prohibition against interference with the rights of others. These rights include their right to the fruits of their labor and the right to freely associate and form contracts. They advocate limiting government to protecting those basic rights.

Greens advocate ten key values (ecological wisdom, grass roots democracy, social justice, nonviolence, decentralization, community-based economics, post-patriarchal values, respect for diversity, personal and global responsibility, and sustainable future focus as a guide for government as well as for their own party organization.) These different guidelines underscore basic differences between the approaches of the two parties and their members. Libertarians tend to be logical and analytical. They are confident that their principles will create an ideal society, even though they have no consensus of what that society would be like. Greens, on the other hand, tend to be more intuitive and imaginative. They have clear images of what kind of society they want, but are fuzzy about the principles on which that society would be based.

Ironically, Libertarians tend to be more Utopian and uncompromising about their political positions, and are often unable to focus on politically winnable proposals to make the system more consistent with their overall goals. Greens on the other hand, embrace immediate proposals with ease, but are often unable to show how those proposals fit in to their ultimate goals.

The most difficult differences to reconcile, however, stem from baggage that members of each party have brought with them from their former political affiliations. Most Libertarians are overly hostile to government and cling to the fiction that virtually all private fortunes are legitimately earned. Most Greens are overly hostile to free enterprise and cling to the fiction that harmony and balance can be achieved through increased government intervention.

Republicans and Democrats will never reconcile these differences, for whatever philosophical underpinnings they have are overwhelmed by vested interests that dominate their internal political processes. These vested interests thrive on keeping the distorted hostilities alive and suppressing any philosophical perspectives that might lead to rational resolution of conflict.

But because minor parties have no real power, they are still primarily guided by values and principles. Committed to pursuing truth above power, they should be more willing to challenge prejudices and expose flaws in their current positions.

There is nothing mutually exclusive between the ten key values of the Greens and the principles of the Libertarians. By reconciling these values and principles, we can bring together people whose allegiance to truth is stronger than their biases. This could be of great value to both parties, partly because any new party that wants to break into a two-party system has to appeal to a broad spectrum of voters. But even more importantly, each party needs attributes the other has to offer. Libertarians need the intuitive awareness of the Greens to keep them from losing touch with people's real values, and Greens need the analytical prowess of the Libertarians to keep them from indulging in emotional self-deception. Libertarians can teach

Greens about the spirit of enterprise and the wonders of economic freedom, and Greens can teach Libertarians about the spirit of compassion and the wonders of community cohesion.

Reconciliation is absolutely necessary. Even if one of the parties could rise to power, it could do great harm by implementing its current agenda in disregard for the perspective of the other Moreover, proposals that violate values and principles of one party often violate those of the other. If members of both groups come together to discuss each other's proposals, they are likely not only to find areas of agreement, but to find conflicts between each group's proposals and its own principles. If this happens, and the two parties work in concert, they stand a real chance of overtaking one of the major parties and drastically altering the political power structure.

Many third parties have had important impacts on American politics, but the last time a political party was dislodged was when the Republicans knocked the ailing Whig party out of contention over 130 years ago. It should be noted that the Republicans were a coalition of several minor parties with seemingly differing agendas, including the Abolitionist Party, the Free-Soil Party, the American (or Know Nothing) Party, disaffected northern Democrats, and most of the members of the dying Whig Party.

A similar coalition of parties has a much better chance of repeating this success today. Anyone who looks at current national platforms of Greens and Libertarians will conclude that bringing these groups together is no easy task. For example, the

Libertarian platform states dogmatically that they 'oppose any and all increases in the rate of taxation or categories of taxpayers, including the elimination of deductions, exemptions, or credits in the name of 'fairness,' simplicity,' or 'neutrality to the free market.' No tax can ever be fair, simple, or neutral to the free market.' On the other hand, the national platform of the Greens leaves one with the impression that they never met a tax they didn't like.

Yet the historical roots of the Greens and the Libertarians are quite similar. That is, early movements for alternative, intentional communities that live in harmony with nature greatly influenced, and were influenced by, anarcho-syndicalists who advanced principles now embraced by the Libertarian Party. This essay will attempt to show that the differences that have emerged are due less to stated principles and values of either group than to the baggage members have brought to each party from their liberal and conservative backgrounds.

On Conservatism and Liberalism

It is said that Libertarians have a conservative philosophy and Greens have a liberal philosophy. In reality, conservatism and liberalism are mere proclivities, and do not deserve to have the name 'philosophy' attached to them. People who have more power than others are inclined to conserve it, and people who have less are inclined to liberate it. In Russia, as in feudal England, conservatives wanted more government control, as government was at the root of their power. Liberals wanted more private discretion.

In the United States today, where power has been vested in private institutions, conservatives want less government and liberals want more. What passes for conservative and liberal 'philosophies' is merely a set of rationalizations that power-mongers hide behind.

Conservative support for traditional approaches and liberal support for new ways of doing things also follows from the desire for power. Traditional approaches have supported those now in power, and change threatens to disrupt their power. Changes are often embraced by conservatives once they prove unable to disrupt the underpinnings of power.

For Greens and Libertarians to rise above the power-based proclivities of liberalism and conservatism, they must focus on their roots and reconcile their positions with their philosophical underpinnings.

On the Roots of the Greens

In *The Green Alternative*, a popular book among American Greens, author Brian Tokar states that 'the real origin of the Green movement is the great social and political upheavals that swept the United States and the entire Western world during the 1960's.' As part of that upheaval, I remember the charge by elders that we acted as though 'we had invented sex.' Mr. Tokar acts as though we had invented Green values.

GREEN REVOLUTION

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The School of Living, founded in 1934 by Ralph Borsodi, is dedicated to learning and teaching right-living. It aims to foster self-governing communities which are democratic, humane, globally conscious and ecologically sound. All of its resources, especially the land it holds in trust, are held in responsible stewardship for all living creatures. The editors welcome your comments andsuggestions. Membership in the School of Living is $20.00annually and includes a subscription to *Green Revolution*.

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Actually, all the innovative and vital features of the Greens stem from an earlier Green movement. The influx of disaffected liberals to the movement since the sixties has actually imbued that movement with many features early Greens would find offensive.

This periodical, *(Green Revolution)*, for example, has been published more or less regularly since 1943, calling for intentional communities based on holistic living, decentralism, sharing natural bounty, freedom of trade, government by consensus, privately-generated honest monetary systems and a host of other societal reforms. Yet the founder, Ralph Borsodi, wrote extensively about the evils of the state, and would clearly oppose most of the interventionist policies brought to the Green Party by disaffected liberals and socialists. The same can be said of more famous proponents of Green values, such as Emerson and Thoreau.

The Green movement grew slowly and steadily and quite apart from mainstream liberalism throughout the sixties and seventies. In the eighties, however, it became clear that the liberal ship, and even more clear that the socialist ship, was headed for the political rocks. The left had simply lost credibility, even among those who felt oppressed by the current system. Gradually at first, discouraged leftists discovered the Green movement provided a more credible platform for their positions.

Because of their excellent communications network, additional members of the left quickly discovered the Greens, embraced their values (at least superficially), joined their ranks and proceeded to drastically alter the Green agenda. For example, early Greens pushed for keeping economies more diverse and decentralized by promoting alternative, voluntary systems, and by criticizing lavish government expenditures on interstate highways, international airports, irrigation projects, and centralized bureaucracies that discriminated against small, independent entrepreneurs. Today the National Platform of the Green Party calls for 'municipalization' of industry (that is, decentralized socialism), limits on foreign trade to save American jobs (which they insist is not protectionism), and other devices to create artificial decentralization under the guiding hand of some benevolent central authority.

The influence of Greens who are fond of government intervention (referred to as Watermelons by more libertarian Greens) seems to be strongest at the national level and weakest within most Green local organizations. Despite the National Green Platform's resemblance to a new face on the old left, many people who are genuinely attracted to Green principles are either undermining or abandoning the left-dominated Green Party USA. Specifically, the principle of decentralism is being used to challenge the right of a national committee to dictate positions to local Greens. This is fortunate for those of us interested in a coalition of Greens and Libertarians, as reconciliation between the Green Left and libertarianism is clearly impossible.

On the Roots of the Libertarian Party

The Libertarian Party was born in 1970. Like the Green Party, it has philosophical roots that extend far back into history. It emerged, however, at a time when conservatism was in decline. Just as Greens attract liberals today and are strongly influenced by the liberal agenda, Libertarians attracted conservatives and were influenced by their agenda. However, as Libertarians are more analytically rigorous, there are fewer blatant inconsistencies between their positions and their principles.

Libertarian bias tends to show up more in prioritization of issues than in any particular issue. For example, Libertarians are far more prone to complain about the capital gains tax than about many other taxes, even though there is nothing uniquely un-libertarian about that particular tax.

Many Libertarians ignore classic libertarian writings and dwell on the works of Ayn Rand, Murray Rothbard and Ludwig von Mises. The classical libertarians get mere superficial attention. For example, few have read *Tragedy of the Commons*, but many quote the title. Specifically, they are unwilling to recognize that the ecological mishaps like those referred to in that work had been absent for centuries when almost all land was common. As with the tragedy of the reservations, commons were abused because so many people had to share access to so little land. All this was a result of government sanction, allowing vast tracts of commonly held land to be appropriated by individuals without proper compensation to those who were dispossessed of access to the earth. These facts are ignored because they cannot be reconciled with pseudo-libertarian conservatism.

Just as contemporary Greens have fondness for government and contempt for private property that their forebears did not share, Libertarians take an extreme position on private property and have hostility to all forms of government that their philosophical predecessors did not share.

Their refusal to acknowledge natural limits to private property and their insistence of unlimited protection of property by the state is their one great departure from their predecessors and their principles. For example, they dismiss the following statement by John Locke, known as the father of private property:

> *God save the world in common to all (hu)mankind.*

> *Whenever, in any country, the proprietor ceases to be the improver, political economy has nothing to say in defense of landed property. When the 'sacredness"of property is talked of, it should be remembered that any such sacredness does not belong in the same degree to landed property.*

They similarly ignore Adam Smith's statement that:

> *Ground rents (land values) are a species of revenue which the owner, in many cases, enjoys without any care or attention of (her) his own. Ground rents are, therefore, perhaps a species of revenue which can best bear to have a peculiar tax imposed upon them.*

Private ownership of the earth and its resources is the one area where Libertarians depart from their own philosophy. After all, their justification of property is in the right of individuals to the fruits of their labor. Because the earth is not a labor product, land value is not the fruit of its owner's labor. Indeed, all land titles are state-granted privileges, and Libertarians deny the right of the state to grant privileges. Even here, Libertarians are on solid ground when they argue that freedom could not survive in a society where land tenure depended on bureaucratic discretion. They are split, however, over devices like land value taxation that would, with a minimum of bureaucracy, put the landless in a more tenable position with respect to land monopolists. Just as liberals dominate the National Greens, conservatives dominate the Libertarian position on this issue, though many Libertarians, including Karl Hess, former editor of the Libertarian Times, do not share that conservative position.

Again, this is a key issue for reconciliation. The Green tradition cannot be reconciled with pseudo-libertarian claims that a subset of the people can claim unlimited title to the planet.

The Magic of Honest Compromise

Compromise is too often a process whereby people on each side give up what they know to be right in order to gain a supposed advantage for their interest group. What I am proposing is that each side give up supposed advantages in order to harmonize with what is right. It takes an open mind and a great deal of courage, but the results can be magnificent.

If the Libertarians accept that ownership of land is a privilege, and agree to pay a fair rent (or land value tax) for that privilege, they will hold the key to getting rid of property (building) tax, income tax, sales tax, amusement tax, and a host of other taxes.

Furthermore, statistical evidence indicates that land value tax promotes compact, harmonious use of land and eliminates a root cause of poverty. In this case, adopting land tax can reduce the need for zoning and protection of rural land, and for housing projects, welfare, and a host of bureaucratic services for the poor.

Greens who study this issue will find that small and simple combination taxes that are essentially payments for exclusive access to common resources will address most of their interests without complicated and intrusive bureaucracies. Land tax itself will eliminate land speculation and land monopoly, and will promote orderly development of land in cities and towns, taking developmental pressure off suburban and rural land.

Severance taxes on our common heritage of nonrenewable resources can even-handedly reduce the rate of exploitation of these resources, conserving them for future generations. Finally, taxes on pollution are really payments for exclusive use of our common rights to clean air and water. It reflects that the air and water is less valuable to the rest of us when it is polluted, and those who pollute literally owe us for the right to trespass on our air and water.

Of course eliminating land monopoly will not solve all the problems by itself, but it is the key area where Greens and Libertarians are separated from each other as well as from their own principles. Once this is reconciled, we can more readily work together on other issues where we are in agreement, such as liberating our monetary system from the banking monopoly, ending military domination of foreign peoples, and ending government interference against people who commit victimless 'crimes.'

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Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling

by John Taylor Gatto

Published by New Society Publishers (4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143), 1992; 104 pages, $9.95 paper.

Reviewed by Ron Miller

John Taylor Gatto's fiery speech to the New York legislature, upon being named the state teacher of the year, was reprinted in several publications and widely circulated among alternative and radical educators, making Gatto an immediate hero within the alternative education movement. That speech, along with four other essays, are brought together in *Dumbing Us Down*, a book that should further establish Gatto as the most visible contemporary critic of public schooling. Like Paul Goodman, John Holt, Herb Kohl, Jim Herndon, and Jonathan Kozol in the 1960s, Gatto is a morally sensitive and passionate teacher who is thoroughly disgusted by the spirit-crushing regimen of mass schooling, and unafraid to say so. Both Kohl and Kozol are still writing important books that present a progressive/radical critique of schools, but Gatto (like the late John Holt) gives voice to a growing populist rebellion against schooling as such. Whether this rebellion will support or counteract the holistic education movement is an open question, to which *Dumbing Us Down* may offer some clues.

One thing must be said up front: Gatto is a superb essayist. His writing is not academic or pedantic, but a model of harnessed passion. He builds his argument carefully and smoothly and then unleashes bold attacks that cut right to the core of many problems of modern education. He clearly has a solid understanding of the historical foundations of modern education, but generally makes his own personal interpretations rather than citing sources or scholars. Indeed, his essay "The Green Monongahela" is an intimate account of his own life and how he became a teacher. He tells a simple story from early in his career, of rescuing a young Hispanic girl from the stupid injustice of the system (she later went on to become an award-winning teacher herself), that captures the essence of his moral crusade against institutional schooling.

Gatto summarizes his argument in an introductory chapter:

> Was it possible I had been hired not to enlarge children's power, but to diminish it? That seemed crazy on the face of it, but slowly I began to realize that the bells and the confinement, the crazy sequences, the age-segregation, the lack of privacy, the constant surveillance, and all the rest of the national curriculum of schooling were designed exactly as if someone had set out to prevent children from learning how to think and act, to coax them into addiction and dependent behavior.(p. xii)

In his speech to the legislature, he makes this charge explicit, describing seven "lessons" that form the heart of the compulsory curriculum.

> "These are the things you pay me to teach":
>
> 1. Confusion. "Everything I teach is out of context. I teach the un-relating of everything." (p. 2)

2. Class position. "That's the real lesson of any rigged competition like school. You come to know your place." (p. 5)

3. Indifference. "Indeed, the lesson of bells is that no work is worth finishing, so why care too deeply about anything?" (p. 6)

4. Emotional dependency. "By stars and red checks, smiles and frowns, prizes, honors, and disgraces, I teach kids to surrender their will to the predestined chain of command." (p. 7)

5. Intellectual dependency. "Of the millions of things of value to study, I decide what few we have time for, or actually it is decided by my faceless employers.... Curiosity has no important place in my work, only conformity" (p. 8). Gatto says this is "the most important lesson, that we must wait for other people, better trained than ourselves, to make the meanings of our lives." (p. 8)

6. Provisional self-esteem. "The lesson of report cards, grades and tests is that children should not trust themselves or their parents but should rely on the evaluation of certified officials. People need to be told what they are worth." (p. 11)

7. One can't hide. Surveillance is an ancient imperative, espoused by certain influential thinkers (such as Plato, Augustine, Calvin, Bacon, and Hobbes). All these childless men ... discovered the same thing: children must be closely watched if you want to keep a society under tight central control." (pp. 11-12)

And here is the crux of Gatto's critique: In the past 125 years, social engineers have sought to keep American life under tight central control. Compulsory schooling is a deliberate effort to establish intellectual, economic, and political conformity so that society can be managed efficiently by a technocratic elite. "School," claims Gatto, "is an artifice that makes....a pyramidal social order seem inevitable, although such a premise is a fundamental betrayal of the American Revolution' (p. 15). Along with the media— especially television, which Gatto criticizes harshly in another essay—schooling removes young people from any genuine experience of community, any genuine engagement with the world or immersion in lasting relationships. It robs them of solitude and privacy. Yet these experiences are what enable us to develop self-knowledge and to grow up 'fully human,' argues Gatto, and he asserts that our most troubling social pathologies, such as drug abuse and violence, are the natural reaction of human lives subjected to mechanical, abstract discipline.

Gatto insistently calls for a return to genuine family and community life by rejecting the social engineering of experts and institutions. In a particularly powerful passage, he rejects the notion that a 'life-and-death international competition' threatens our national existence, as *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) warned. Such a notion is 'based on a definition of productivity and the good life' that is 'alienated from common human reality.' True meaning is genuinely found, Gatto writes,

> ....In families, in friends, in the passage of seasons, in nature, in simple ceremonies and rituals, in curiosity, generosity, compassion, and service to others, in a decent independence and privacy, in all the free and inexpensive things out of which real families, real friends, and real communities are built.... (pp. 16-17)

And these are the things we have lost in our hierarchically managed, global empire-building society.

In the essay 'We Need Less School, Not More,' Gatto draws a sharp distinction between true community (in which there is open communication and shared participation) and institutional networks (which value the individual only in terms of the institution's particular goals). A network cannot be a healthy substitute for family or community, Gatto argues; it is mechanical, impersonal, and overly rational. Schooling is a prime example of this:

> If, for instance, an A average is accounted the central purpose of adolescent life—the requirements for which take most of the time and attention of the aspirant—and the worth of the individual is reckoned by victory or defeat in this abstract pursuit, then a social machine has been constructed which, by attaching purpose and meaning to essentially meaningless and fantastic behavior, will certainly dehumanize students, alienate them from their own human nature, and break the natural connection between them and their parents, to whom they would otherwise look for significant affirmations.' (p. 62)

This is a brilliant, radical critique of the nature of modern schooling. Gatto has certainly earned his heroic stature with his deeply insightful observations into the very essence of what public education has become. His writings deserve to be pondered seriously by holistic teachers and can contribute a great deal of insight and energy to our work.

Nevertheless, there is a fundamental issue at stake here, which could end up sharply dividing the holistic education movement if we do not sensitively address it. Gatto, like John Holt and a great many homeschoolers, holds and defends a *liber-*

tarian social philosophy, in the John Locke/Adam Smith tradition. Gatto argues that a common (social) good arises only out of the free interaction of individuals and intimate communities pursuing their own local good. Individuals and families are seen as the primary human reality, while social forces are generally treated as a distressing nuisance. (The term 'social engineers' seems to include anyone who seriously addresses social issues.)

In the spirit of dialectical discourse (honest disagreement leading to a more inclusive synthesis), which Gatto admires and knows to be the heart of genuine education, I wish to oppose the libertarian position with one that is more socially conscious. I am especially sensitive to the nuances of this question, since I spent several of my intellectual formative years as an enthusiastic student of libertarian philosophy and political theory, and still have a great deal of sympathy for it. Gatto is justified in calling for a genuine community life - to replace the stultifying power of the state, huge corporations, self-serving experts and professionals, and all impersonal institutions. Like other libertarians and homeschool advocates, however, Gatto throws the baby out with the bathwater by categorically defining 'school' as an impersonal network and virtually equating educators and activists with 'social engineers.'

The problem is illustrated vividly in the book's closing essay, 'The Congregational Principle.' Here Gatto lauds the Puritan settlers of Massachusetts Bay for organizing their churches and towns largely free of higher authority, thereby bringing about local solutions to social and political questions.

He explicitly recognizes the parochialism inherent in such radical localism: He discusses the towns' practice of banishing people whose religious views or personal qualities were discomfiting to the community, and he even acknowledges that dissidents (such as Quakers) were publicly humiliated and whipped (a few were also executed). Gatto's main point in relating this story is to celebrate the fact that New Englanders eventually evolved to a more open, liberal worldview—without compulsory schooling or social engineering.

But Gatto's historical interpretation is flawed by his libertarian bias and is quite unconvincing: He asserts that the colonists enjoyed 'nearly unconditional local choice' in a social 'free market' (pp. 90-91)—a strange claim to make for a rigidly moralistic society with a single established church! Gatto claims that New England culture was transformed by 'something mysterious inside the structure of Congregationalism.' (p. 90) (read: Adam Smith's 'invisible hand' that magically turns self-interest into common good). But this utterly ignores the distinctly social events that forced New Englanders to alter their parochial culture in the early decades of the nineteenth century—the nationalistic impulses released by the War of 1812 (which New Englanders had bitterly and futilely opposed); Irish Catholic immigration; enlightenment and romantic movements; the rise of science, industrialism, and urban centers; and the growing tensions between North and South over trade, tariffs, and slavery. More important, it doesn't bother Gatto in the least that the liberalization of New England culture took two hundred years and prob-ably would have taken far longer had these crucial societal events not intervened.

Libertarian thinking is a much-needed antidote to the hierarchical, mechanical power that has been amassed by social institutions in the twentieth century. We surely do need to pull the plug on these monstrous organizations. But that is not all we need to do. We live in a society that is poisoned by inequality, racism, and grossly materialistic values. We live on a planet that is threatened with biocide within the next decade or two. We simply do not have two hundred years to wait for some 'invisible hand' to lead individuals and families and self-satisfied little communities to begin addressing these tremendous issues! We must find a way to incorporate personal and communal independence into a social movement that recognizes our interdependence.

As I see it, this is exactly what holistic thinking attempts to do. Holistic educators are not 'social engineers'—we reject the compulsion and fragmentation and alienation of public schooling as earnestly as Gatto—but we recognize that the modern crisis demands a concrete response grounded in certain moral, philosophical and spiritual principles. Holistic politics—otherwise known as the Green movement—explicitly embraces decentralization and personal empowerment, but within the context of severe social and ecological problems that need to be addressed. In a society of blatant inequality, how will the 'free market' provide quality educational opportunity for poor children? In a society driven by addicted consumerism, how will families, on their own, deal with environmental devastation, media brainwashing, or corporate control of resources and jobs? These are problems of a social dimension, not solely a personal one. Getting rid of compulsory regimentation in school is an important part of our task, but by no means is it a panacea that will restore our society to some golden age of free people and whole families. A holistic response—not an atomistic one—is required.

The point of contention is this: Is a school necessarily an 'artifice' as Gatto calls it, an impersonal network, an agent of coercion and social engineering? Or is it an organic social creation that can serve a wide variety of moral purposes, from totalitarian indoctrination to complete human liberation, depending on the predominant values of the larger culture? I hold the latter view. Compulsory, authoritarian schooling is a symptom of our social and cultural sickness, not its cause. Genuine individuality and community are purged from schools for the same reason they are so difficult to find in families today: The larger society is driven by mechanistic, reductionistic, competitive values. But holistic educators—from Johann Pestalozzi to Rudolf Steiner to progressive and whole language educators—have argued that a school can be a nurturing community, a place where young people and their families might find respite from the oppressive forces of society. Radical educators—from John Dewey and George Counts to Herb Kohl and Paulo Freire—go further, and assert that school can be an active agent of social renewal and reconstruction by empowering young people to think critically and act cooperatively against the forces that oppress them.

The value of Gatto's position is to raise a crucial question: Can public schools—government-run schools—ever truly embrace a holistic or radical pedagogy that threatens the existence of the power structure itself? Steiner raised this question. So did Holt. So does legal scholar Stephen Arons (1983). My own respect for libertarian thinking leads me to take this as a very serious and fundamental question, which holistic and radical educators often overlook. I don't know the answer to it. Here is where the dialectic, the dialogue, between libertarians and holistic/radical social activists needs to begin.

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Ron Miller, founder and former editor of Holistic Education Review, *has also written* What Are Schools For - Holistic Education in American Culture *and* New Directions in Education - Selections from Holistic Education Review, *and has contributed several articles to* ΣΚΟΛΕ.

In connection with Dan Sullivan's plea for cooperation between Greens and Libertarians, I think we alternative/homeschoolers need to remember that Ron is and always has been a very good friend! Not all (self-proclaimed) 'Greens' are!

THE STREETS TAKE A SON

August 30, 1992 By Linda Yglesias

Daily News Staff Writer

CRAIG PRENTICE WAS ONE OF THOUSANDS GROWING UP AROUND DRUGS. DESPITE CARRYING A GUN, HE WASN'T INVINCIBLE.

STEPHEN PIERCE ran out on the street in his bedroom slippers. 'Gunshots were blazing,' he said.

He saw a body cradled beside a police car. The cops were trying to find a pulse. Blood was everywhere. It was his son with 14 bullet holes and more than 50 spent shell casings at his feet.

'I got to get him to the hospital,' Pierce screamed.

A cop hugged him: 'He doesn't need a hospital,' he said.

Frances Pierce didn't know it was her son under the sheet. 'I couldn't see his face, but then I saw his sneakers sticking out,' she said. 'I made them show me. His eyes and his mouth were wide open like he was shocked. I know he called out for me. 'The first time he got arrested, when they had him handcuffed to a pole, I said 'Don't you know you can die? He said, 'I can't die. It can't happen to me, Mommy.' '

On June 23, the Pierces' 11 year-old son, Craig Prentice became just another peachfuzzed wanna-be caught up in the city's burgeoning drug world, who found out that despite carrying a gun he wasn't invincible.

The bullet has become the leading cause of death for the city's teenagers, and so far this year 31316-year-olds and under have been shot, at least 43 fatally.

And Craig Prentice (who used his mother's maiden name) was just one of thousands of neighborhood kids growing up around drugs, scratching for sneaker money and aspiring to be druglords. 'He idolized drug dealers,' his father said with anguish in his eyes.

TRIED EVERYTHING

The Pierces used everything in the parental arsenal from heart-to-heart talks to public embarrassment — to dissuade their son from making a life on the streets. Craig Prentice—who still played hide-and-seek with his sister, made funny faces and played silly pranks to get a laugh—was selling a little crack here and there for Nike sneaker money and Boss jeans. A week before

Christmas, he was arrested for possession.

'I don't think Craig was one of the bad kids into doing wrong things,' said Lt. Joel Pierson of the 46th Precinct. 'He was a kid sucked into a young, violent-prone group that carried weapons, a loose-knit group of six or seven. He happened to go along with peer pressure. He got entangled. He was acting on behalf of an older drug dealer who was using the kids. Death was the result.'

Craig Prentice, tall, gangly and baby-faced, a 3-pound preemie born June 2, 1976, died a little after midnight, June 23 in an ambush on Macombs Road and University Ave. on a South Bronx sidewalk near his home. He was hit with bullets from an AK-47 assault rifle and .45-caliber and .9-mm. automatics. He never had a chance to pull out the .25-caliber handgun he carried. By all the rules of cause and effect and parenting, he should not have even been hanging out on the streets.

Stephen Pierce, 36, director of office services for a midtown law firm, belonged to the Black Spades gang in the early 1970s. He had done a little purse-snatching and a little numbers, nothing more. In 1982, his own baby brother, Darryl, 22, was murdered and left in a plastic bag on 118th St. Pierce suspects it was a drug execution.

GUN DIDN'T HELP TEEN IN AMBUSH

Pierce went arrow-straight and thought he was street smart enough to keep his son off the corners where he once had rumbled with chains and knives. In the end, he admits he wasn't. 'He was a nobody trying to be somebody,' said Pierce, sitting in his living room where baby pictures of Craig, his brother, Wesley, and his sister, Tiffany, fill the wall in his apartment. 'He was a small fish in a big pond. He wanted to be recognized as a big potato. I did my best. I took him to see the Knicks and the Mets and the Yankees. I took him skating. I bought him a drum set. I'd sit him down and preach to him what the streets really are. But I couldn't snatch him back. The streets got my son.'

'This is the truth about Craig,' said Frances Pierce, who works the night shift at a White Castle hamburger restaurant. 'Anything positive, he wanted no part of. All he lived for was sneakers and jeans. That was 'fly,' (hip) bigtime, to him.'

Drug dealers know that poor kids looking for status, be it money or power, is where the trail to death begins, said Lt. Tom Kelly, an 11-year veteran who has worked narcotics in the city's roughest precincts.

'Kids don't just jump right into the business,' he said.

'They start out as a lookout, standing on the corner and whistling or yelling 'agua' ('Cool it'); that's their job.'

Dealers know it's good to have younger lookouts and younger steerers. If they get arrested, they're not going to do any time. If they prove themselves reliable, capable of hanging out all day, they can move up to steerer.

Craig Prentice never made it that far. In :his elementary and junior high school, Prentice's brother, Wesley, 18, brought home straight A's and 'Most Valuable Player' trophies.

IGNORED ADVICE

'I'd tell him again and again, 'Just be yourself. That's enough for me.' But he felt like he had to do the same thing Wesley did, straight A's, sports,' Pierce said. 'He did it in another way. By the time my son got to seventh grade, when he was barely 13, the streets were easing in.'

At Community Junior High School 82, Prentice joined his friends for subway performances, dancing in the trains for change.

'They'd come back with $300, $400,' said Wesley.

In March 1990, he was arrested for receiving stolen property. His older buddies stuck him, the 15-year-old juvenile, with the VCR, TV and radio because they knew a kid wouldn't do jail time. In June 1991, the day before his junior high graduation, he was arrested while joy-riding in a stolen car. One of his older friends had taken the car and picked him up. A week before Christmas between his transfer from Lincoln Academy to John F. Kennedy High School, he was arrested for possessing three vials of crack.

'I saw the way he was going, I tried to warn him,' said Wesley. 'He'd started dealing crack whenever he wanted sneakers or Boss jeans.'

'In March, he asked me for $70 to buy some sneakers,' said Frances Pierce. 'I wouldn't let him have it because he'd been cutting classes.'

When the cops called her, she refused to get her son out of juvenile detention. 'I told Craig, 'Three strikes, you're out. You think this is a joke.' '

She told a family court judge about the problems she was having with Craig and pleaded for help. He told her the law wouldn't let him hold her son for any length of time, but placed Craig for a week in a boys' group home.

'When I went to visit he was crying,' she said. 'He begged me to let him come home.'

Prentice's parents said they tried everything they could to steer him away from temptation.

'Once I snatched him by the collar from these kids he was standing with and they followed me into my apartment building,' said Pierce. 'They didn't know I was his father. One looked like he was about to pull a gun. 'What you doing to my man?' he said. 'My man?' I said. 'My son, you mean.' He was getting a big reputation. Too many people,were beginning to know him for the wrong things.'

In the past few months, four of Prentice's friends had been fatally shot. One, 'Champ,' died with a .357 bullet in his head, the victim of a long-running gang dispute.

The Pierces had heart-to-heart talks with their son. His mother took him several times to a doctor to have him tested for drugs.

'I knew by then he was running with a wolf pack — I don't care what they say about calling it that—I knew he was running with the wrong set of kids,' said Stephen Pierce. 'I'd search him randomly for weapons or drugs. I'd check his hands to see if he'd been smoking reefer. '

Shortly before midnight on June 22, Pierce was watching the Arsenio Hall show. Prentice was being recruited in an ugly Jamaican-Dominican drug war. Frances Pierce had left for work around 5:30 p.m. that day feeling particularly cheerful. Her boss had told Prentice earlier that day he had a job at White Castle, and Prentice had seemed happy.

GUNNED DOWN

According to investigators, the 25-year-old leader of a violent Jamaican posse, Christopher Livingston—who was later gunned down — was moving his drug dealers into the neighborhood, which was basically controlled by a Dominican drug gang. Livingston wasn't on the street, police said, but was the mastermind who convinced Prentice and his young friends to swagger down the street in a show of power.

'They were apparently having a dispute with some Dominicans who had control of a drug location,' said Pierson of the 46th Precinct. 'They were attempting to move in on somebody else's turf.'

Based on police, family and street accounts, one of Prentice's acquaintances had mouthed off to a member of the Dominican drug gang. That night he was bragging about his bravado to a handful of the boys along Macombs Road, including Prentice. A little while later, some Dominicans drove up on the

DRESSED TO DIE

by Linda Iglesias

Daily News Staff Writer

VOUR TEENAGER comes home with a $100 pair of Air Jordan sneakers, Boss jeans, a couple of silk shirts and a fancy bomber jacket. He has started hanging out with a slightly older crowd. He's cutting classes if he goes to school at all and he's staying out late. He won't tell you where he got his beeper. He's probably not doing drugs, though. Most likely, he's beginning in a trade where those who use the product aren't allowed to sell it.

You won't find a gun in his room. He stashes it in a mailbox, in the basement at his girlfriend's house or maybe in his locker at school. His customers won't be anyone you know. This is a business in which the clientele are kept at arm's length.

He has signed on with his hero, the local drug czar who doesn't have to recruit too hard. He already knows about your child, whether he's a mama's boy or a home boy, cold-blooded or cowardly. He knows when your child comes and goes. He knows where you live.

"These are poor kids," said Detective Cedric Wilkinson of the 70th Precinct, which covers Flatbush and Kensington in Brooklyn. "They see the quick, fast dollar. "It's not a hard business to learn. These local dealers know these kids. If the dealer's going to make an investment in a kid, give him some of his drugs, he'll know where the kid lives, his family. He'll know how to contact the kid."

It's all part of life and death in the inner city.

"We're out on the street at a heavy drug location, Stratford Ave in the middle of the block, 7 p.m. making sure the dealers weren't on the corner. It's still light outside," said Lt. Tom Kelly of the 43d Precinct. "This kid comes up, he couldn't have been more than 13 or 14, and says, 'Why are you bothering us? We're not doing anything. We're just selling drugs.' I said, 'That's all you're doing?' And then he said, 'Everybody's got to make a living.' "

sidewalk and tried to run down some of Prentice's friends. One of Livingston's dealers decided he wanted to show the Dominicans he wasn't afraid and got Prentice and his friends to walk down Macombs Road with him.

His father says Prentice didn't know he was going up against a Dominican drug gang. 'My son wouldn't have been stupid enough to cross them,' he said. 'They've owned the block for years.'

Shortly before midnight, as Prentice and his friends walked toward University Ave., somebody handed Prentice a .25-caliber pistol.

'One or two Dominicans came around the corner with an AK-47, a .9-mm. and a .45,' Pierson said. 'Without notice, the Dominicans opened fire. '

Pierce heard the gunshots as he watched television. He was afraid his wife would come home from work and wind up in the middle of whatever was going on. He put on his bedroom slippers and went outside to wait for her.

The bullets came from both sides, the Jamaicans and the Dominicans. After the first volley of shots hit him, Prentice played dead, eyewitnesses and neighbors said. After a while he figured it was all right to get up and run. He started yelling 'Don't shoot,' but was hit by more bullets.

Pierce got a foot away from his son's body, his head nestled in a cop's hands. 'I went over to hug him,' Pierce said. 'All I could see was his blood running down the sidewalk.'

Craig Prentice died in dark blue Boss jeans and white Nike sneakers. The little .25-caliber pistol was tucked under a blue hooded sweatshirt. A plastic crucifix hung around his neck.

FOR KIDS, DEATH IS A WAY OF LIFE

THEY ARE wet behind the ears in a drug civilization where 'old' means 17. They live precariously short lives in a world where turf changes hands like clockwork in ambush executions.

ANDREW WHITTAKER
saw the two men approaching. He knew they were drug dealers. They looked him over without saying a word, then walked away. It was around 1 a.m. July 19. Ten minutes later, they returned to the schoolyard in the St. Albans section of Queens and accused him of selling crack on their turf.

Whittaker, 16, was with some friends and didn't want these home boys showing him up. Maybe he should go home and get his gun and his bulletproof vest, he said.

One of the dealers pulled an automatic pistol and fired point-blank into his chest. Whittaker ran 30 yards before falling dead. The shooter stood over his body: 'Where's your vest now?'

RICHARD PERDOMO
was killed in a driveby shooting on 176th St. at Audubon Ave., his friends told cops. The lie quickly unraveled. He'd been hanging out with a bad crowd, would go missing for days and come home wearing new clothes. He always had money and he carried a beeper.

His mother, fearing he was selling crack, hired a cab to follow him. Her worst fears were confirmed. On June 29, in apartment 68, Perdomo was showing off his .9-mm. He handed the gun to Luis Deschamps who shot him in the chest, police said. Deschamps and another friend carried Perdomo to the street and took him by gypsy cab to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. He was dead on arrival. Deschamps, 18, who has been charged with murder, claimed the gun discharged.

JASON LABOY's
decomposing body lay in the hallway, his eyes, hands and feet bound with duct tape. A tenant in the apartment building had called police on July 16 to complain about loud music. Heroin, lactose, strainers, masks, cutting spoons, cutting cards and a scale were scattered around the small apartment at 2034 Benedict Ave. in the Parkchester section of the Bronx. Inside a box, hundreds of envelopes had recently been puffed open like mouths of fish, ready to be filled.

The 16-year-old's father, Eusuerio Rivera, 53, and his stepmother, Adrienne Jones, 28, lay dead nearby from head wounds. Before Jones was killed, she hid her 3-month-old daughter under a bed. Someone, police said, had ripped off the family business.

AMBROSE ROBERTS,
15, stood with his drug-dealing mentor, Darren Jones. At 8:30 p.m., July 8, members of a rival posse from a block and a half away walked into the courtyard at 654 Kingsboro Walk in Brooklyn. They were looking to expand their territory. They wanted to show Jones, 23, they weren't scared to walk down his street. The posse opened fire with a .38, a .9mm and a .380. Jones, who had six vials of crack in his pocket, was killed instantly. Roberts tried to run away and was fatally shot in the head.

KENDALL JOHNSON and **HAROLD THORTON,** both 16 — 'Hippie' and 'Fats' on the streets—were hawking crack on 132nd St. and Madison Ave. As they walked out of an abandoned building on the corner, two gunmen opened fire. Police said the dealer who ran the local crackhouse had hired the killers and provided a .38-caliber revolver and a .9-mm. automatic to do away with the two upstart dealers trying to take over his corner. They shot Thornton in the back and Johnson five times, close up, in the head.

- Linda Iglesias

Reprinted from THE DAILY NEWS *for Sunday, August 30, 1992.*

And, in honor of Rosh Hashanah (as we went to press):

THE SONG OF ISAAC

by Leonard Cohen

The door opened slowly
And my father came in;
I was nine years old.
And he stood so far above me
And his blue eyes were shining
And his voice was very cold.
He said, "I've had a vision,
And you know I'm strong and holy;
I must do as I've been told."
So we started up the mountain;
I was running,
He was walking,
And his axe was made of gold.

The trees they got much smaller,
The lake a lady's mirror,
We stopped to drink some wine.
And he threw the bottle over;
Broke a minute later,
And he put his hand on mine.
Thought I saw an eagle,
But it might have been a vulture,
I never could decide.
My father built an altar,
He looked once behind his shoulder,
He knew I would not hide.

You who build these altars now,
To sacrifice these children,
You must not do it any more;
A scheme is not a vision,
And you never have been tempted
By the devil or the Lord.
You who stand above them now,
Your hatchets blunt and bloodied,
You were not there before
When I lay on the altar
And my father's hand was trembling
With the beauty of the Word.

You who call me brother now,
Forgive me if I ask,
According to whose plan.
When it all comes down to dust,
I will kill you if I must,
I will love you if I can.
And may I never learn to scorn
The body out of chaos born,
The woman and the man.
Mercy on our uniform,
Man of peace, man of war,
The peacock spreads his fan.

There Are No Children Here -
The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America

by Alex Kotlowitz
Doubleday, 1991

Savage Inequalities
Children in America's Schools

by Jonathan Kozol
Crown, 1991

Reviewed by Joseph Pearl

Two recent books about poverty, race, and education have made me think about the relevance of humanistic psychology in solving critical problems plaguing America.

In *There Are No Children Here*, Alex Kotlowitz describes the day-to-day lives of two young African Americans, Lafeyette and Pharoah Rivers, who live in a Chicago public housing project. His book focuses on the period from the summer of 1987, when Pharoah was nine and Lafeyette almost twelve, to the fall of 1989. It's about what living in an environment of poverty, racism, and violence does to the lives and spirits of children.

When Kotlowitz first met Lafeyette Rivers in 1985, he asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. "'If I grow up, I'd like to be a bus driver,' he told me. If, not when. At the age of ten, Lafeyette wasn't sure he'd make it to adulthood."

Kotlowitz's approach to his subject matter is emotional and personal. He became friends with Lafeyette, Pharoah, and their mother, and used some of the money he earned from his book to send both boys to private schools. Though he doesn't explicitly offer solutions to the problems he details, his own example suggests the efficacy of people getting to know each other on a one-to-one basis, and caring about each other as fellow human beings.

Kotlowitz's example is one that humanistic psychology can enthusiastically endorse. The importance of authentic and caring interpersonal relationships is a central tenet of humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychologists and educators would have a major role to play in any large scale effort to promote such relationships in our society.

In *Savage Inequalities*, Jonathan Kozol takes us with him as he visits the communities and schools of the poor across our country. He paints a horrifying picture: East St. Louis, Illinois, which is 98% black, has had no regular trash collection since October of 1987. Its schools are regularly closed down because of backups in the city's barely functioning sewer system. 75% of its population lives on welfare. Fiscal shortages have forced the layoff of 1,170 of 1,400 city employees during the past 12 years.

A teacher at the University of Southern Illinois describes East St. Louis as "a repository for a non-white population that is now regarded as expendable.:" A reporter for the *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, discussing living conditions in East St. Louis, tells Kozol, "Why Americans permit this is so hard for somebody like me, who grew up in the real Third World, to understand. I'm from India. In Calcutta this would be explicable, perhaps. I keep thinking to myself, 'My God! This is the United States!'" A nine year old boy tells Kozol about his sister, who was raped and murdered and then dumped behind his school.

Kozol is more analytical than Kotlowitz. He focuses on the way public schools are funded, quoting numerous statistics showing the inequity in funding between the schools of the (mostly white) financially well-off and the (mostly black and hispanic) poor. A recent study of the wealthiest and poorest districts of Long Island, New York, for example, showed that differences were large, and had doubled in a five year period: Schools in the wealthy town of Manhasset spent $11,370 for each pupil in 1987. In Levittown, a community of mostly working-class white families, per-pupil spending was $6,900. In poorer Roosevelt, where the schools are 99% non-white, per-pupil expenditure was $6,340. A realtor tells him, "If you're looking for a home, you can look at the charts for school expenditures and use them to determine if the neighbors will be white and wealthy or, conversely, black or white but poor."

Kozol concludes that the first step toward any solution of America's problems with poverty, race, and education must be to fund the schools of children from poor families at the same level as the schools of children from wealthy families (if not at a higher level, he adds, since poor children have greater needs than rich children). He points out that this would require significant sacrifice on the part of the non-poor. They would either have to pay higher taxes or accept lower levels of funding for their own children's schools. In either case, their children would have to compete with the children of the poor on a more even playing field.

Kozol's analysis is emblematic for humanistic psychology. With its emphasis on self-actualization and developing one's own fullest potential, and its tendency to promote quick-fix, feelgood nostrums, humanistic psychology does not easily lend itself to calls for self-sacrifice. In addition, the humanistic psychology community is very much a part of that segment of society—white and well-off—that has benefitted most from the inequity in school funding that Kozol criticizes.

What Kozol's and Kotlowitz's books make clear is that America is in the midst of a crisis. One cannot help but ask, What kind of country is this, what kind of people are we, to allow some of us to have so little while others have so much? Both books bring home an unavoidable conclusion: The way things are now is wrong. It is simply not morally acceptable for a free and democratic country to treat its people this way.

Whether humanistic psychology will be part of the solution or part of the problem remains to be seen.

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Reprinted from *Perspective*, the newsletter of the Association for Human Psychology for July, 1992.

SEPARATE AND SAVAGELY UNEQUAL

by Nick Chiles

an interview with Jonathan Kozol

Twenty-five years ago Jonathan Kozol burst upon the national scene with the publication of his book Death at an Early Age, *a grim account of his teaching experiences among poor Black children in Boston's inner-city classrooms. In passionate prose, Kozol accused the white educational establishment of hypocrisy and racism in its neglect of the schools attended by children of color. His angry words shamed the nation, and his book won the National Book Award in 1968.*

Last year Kozol published Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools, *another searing indictment of America's public-school system and its treatment of Black and Latino children. Not much has changed for children of color in the last 25 years, and Kozol shows just how inadequate, separate and "inherently" unequal many public schools remain. The reason? Fewer tax dollars are spent on the schools attended by many African-American children, with predictable results: The education received is starkly and savagely unequal. Kozol, 55, is unyielding in his examination of just how unfairly America has rigged the distribution of tax money for public schools in favor of the white middle class, and his portrayal of the result of these fiscal decisions and their impact on the children who must live with them is stunning. Time is running out for many of our youngsters. The urban rebellions of this spring demonstrated that there is as much despair today as there was 30 years ago. And it has been 38 years since the historic decision of Brown v. Board of Education mandated that America's schools work for all her children. How long will we let things continue as they are?*

It is crucial that we tear down the barriers that block the paths of our children— particularly when, as Jonathan Kozol so vividly illustrates, the most formidable obstacle is often the very institution created to help them succeed. ESSENCE writer Nick Chiles recently spoke to Jonathan Kozol about the inequities in America's schools.

ESSENCE: *Do you find that the powers-that-be are offended or upset about the things you write?*

Kozol: No question the Bush Administration is offended by what I write. When the book was published, *Publishers Weekly*, for the first time in more than 100 years, wrote a letter on the front cover, which is usually reserved for ads, to President Bush asking him to read this book.

ESSENCE: *Didn't you meet with members of the Bush Administration?*

Kozol: One of his domestic-policy advisers contacted me and invited me to a dinner. But I had no direct response from Bush or his education secretary, Lamar Alexander. Alexander refuses to appear on any network television program I'm appearing on.

The only time we had a direct debate was on the *MacNeill/Lehrer News-Hour*. The interviewer had to force him to reply. The book is a direct challenge to the White House agenda . I said explicitly, either in the book or since, that America 2000: An Education Strategy isn't an education plan, it's simply a re-election platform for the President. Here you have 62 pages of cloudy prose that speak of virtually every aspect of American education. But not a whisper, not one reference, to race, segregation or equality. It's just stunning that an American president in 1992 could leave out the central moral agony of our society. I said explicitly on *MacNeill/Lehrer* that that was shameful, unforgivable. So it's not surprising that the administration hasn't felt terribly friendly toward me.

But with the exception of the White House, the response has been astonishing. There are a great many Americans of diverse political positions who have a sense of fair play. After reading this book, they feel shocked at the way we rig the game of education. I was just out in the Midwest. I talked to a businessman in a rich suburb that spends much more money on education than the cities. He said this is just intolerable, that we wouldn't play Little League baseball this way. We wouldn't send our kids out with ball mitts while we send kids in Chicago out with their bare hands. I said to him, "Why do you do it?" He was silent for a moment, then he said, "Life isn't fair, is it?"

I think deep down most Americans believe or think they believe in fair play. It's deep in the American psyche. We want our games to be fair.

***ESSENCE**: But do most Americans really want a fair playing field for their own children? Don't the majority of Americans, rich and poor, want much more than that?*

Kozol: In the book I deal with that issue somewhat. The book asks: What does America really believe about fair play? I do say at one point I don't think anybody, with the exception of a few sinister Americans, wishes these poor kids in the inner cities any harm. I don't think that rich white people wish Black children harm. What they do want is for their child to get the best. Most Americans say they believe in equal opportunity hut what they want is for their child to have a better-than-equal opportunity. Nobody thinks it through, but what it means is someone else's child gets a less-than-equal opportunity. I think of it as the inevitable result of selfishness.

Perhaps I'm sentimental, but I think the best of ordinary citizens. But I do make a distinction. I think many of our political leaders, particularly those coming from right-wing think tanks like The Heritage Foundation, are inherently cruel, even sinister. I'm speaking of an entire school of thought, socially Darwinist in nature, that writes off an entire class of children, that sees Black and Hispanic children as little pint-sized deficits, children who aren't really worth much to our society. This leads to a mentality of triage. Save the best, bury the rest. They are willing to skim off a certain number of poor Black kids. Some of them will be useful. Every newspaper needs a certain number of Black journalists. A racist administration needs one Clarence Thomas, one Clarence Pendleton. The Army needs one Colin Powell, although I think he's a finer person than the other two. Every college needs a Black vice-president, usually a vice-president of community affairs. It's a very demeaning role. I get the impression that the larger mass of poor Black kids are thought of as an expendable, unwelcome mass. That has led to triage. That is why the government is unwilling to invest in those desperately unhappy kids who live in the South Bronx, East St. Louis, the South Side of Chicago, Paterson, Camden. I feel sorry for Black superintendents who run some of these school systems. We didn't get them until the cities were destitute. Same with mayors, chiefs of police. What better insurance for a racist society than to put Blacks in charge of the institutions that mediate injustice? For a Black superintendent of an inner-city system, his or her job is to sanitize apartheid. Sweeten the pill.

ESSENCE: *Recently Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander was asked what he thought of an effort by parents in New York City to create a checklist for a model school to see how many things their school lacked. He said instead of starting there,they should start in the classroom, making sure that children are learning. What's your response to that?*

Kozol: Lamar Alexander is a genius at artful evasion of the central point. he will send poor parents and Black parents into any kind of ritual as long as it ends up with them blaming themselves , as long as they don't get the same options his children do. His son goes to an exclusive prep school in Washington, D.C. He doesn't even believe in the public-school system in Washington, D.C. I m not trying to tell Black parents what to do, but he represents an administration that has savaged Black people.

If I were a Black parent, I wouldn't take advice from Lamar Alexander. I wouldn't let him get anywhere near my children. I would consider him an enemy. When he discusses federal expenditures, he says the federal government only provides 6 percent of local school expenditures. Before Reagan it was higher.

ESSENCE: *You have called the push for all-Black, all-male schools "heartbreaking," but most inner-city schools are all Black anyway. Why do you object to them?*

Kozol: I was just down in Detroit, the main place they are pushing for this. When I said it's heartbreaking, I wasn't condemning the people in Detroit schools. Because they're all-Black schools anyway. Maybe there's a legitimate debate about excluding girls, but that's a separate issue. To accuse Black educators of favoring separatism is preposterous. If Black educators in

Detroit say this is apartheid, an American Soweto, and they are trying to save some of these kids, I say more power to them. But it's heartbreaking that they are operating under the assumption that we will always have separate and unequal schools.

They are trying to build a better ghetto. That's what I meant by heartbreaking. What I said is what Black educators are trying to do in Detroit is make a meager virtue out of a bleak necessity because they have no choice. They spend half of what people in Grosse Pointe are getting. Virtually the only Black people in Grosse Pointe are young Black women coming in to scrub floors for rich whites.

ESSENCE: *What is the message of the latest Supreme Court decision, giving school districts a respite from desegregation requirements*

Kozol: It's one more nail in the coffin of the *Brown* decision. It's limited in impact and we knew it was coming, but it sets a tone. What I fear is that the Supreme Court will send us back to *Plessy v. Ferguson.* [In 1896, with the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, the Supreme Court ruled that "separate but equal" accommodations in schools and so on were acceptable.] [Some] people in inner cities are fighting for *Plessy*. They've given up on *Brown*. That's why I say in my book we've been set back 100 years in social policy.

There are some districts where it is worth fighting for desegregation. But I guess most African-Americans have given up on that ... they don't even dream anymore. I still dream about it.

ESSENCE: *Is there an impact when predominantly white teachers teach predominantly Black and Latino students'*

Kozol: Absolutely I regret it, but that's the reality today. Not enough young Black people are entering the pool of public-school teachers to make that dramatically different in the near future. That's why when people in Detroit say we will have a school of all-Black male teachers here, I say it's just a game of musical chairs because there are so few and you are taking them away from somewhere else. You are not increasing the numbers. Where's the change going to come? We're going to have to change from the beginning. That's why I say we should start in Head Start. Make the teaching jobs more attractive, make inner-city teaching more attractive. In Chicago, a Black male teacher with all the advanced degrees and everything else coming out of school, the most he can expect to make in the inner city is nearly $40,000. In the most exclusive suburbs, he can make nearly $70,000.

ESSENCE: *Do children think that things will get better?*

Kozol: The real little kids seem so hopeful—first- and second-graders. Kindergartners are so full of hope, cheerfulness, high expectations. By the time they get into fourth grade, many begin to lose heart. They see the score, understand they're not getting what others are getting. They say they know the difference. They see suburban schools on television. They see them as a metaphor, and they are correct. The acres of green lawns, fields, wonderful libraries, small classes with 18 kids.

They begin to get the point that they are not valued much in our society. By the time they are in junior high, they understand it. In Morris High School in The Bronx, one child said to me, and I'll never forget it, "We have eyes and we can see; we have hearts and we can feel." He said, "We know the difference."

ESSENCE: *Members of the current administration believe that vouchers will help children get a more equitable education. Will vouchers even the playing field?*

Kozol: I'm bitterly opposed to vouchers. The concept is as sinister as can be. Secretary Alexander has a seductive formula for selling vouchers to the public. He says rich people already have the choice to send their child to private school; why don't poor parents have the same choice? You would think he was ready to send poor Black children in Harlem to Exeter.

But he's only talking about vouchers of a couple thousand dollars. That might be part of the tuition at the lowest-level private school. Rich people will use it as a subsidy for the best schools .The only way it would be just is if every child in America got all equal vouchers pegged for the best private schools in America. The Bush Administration is never going to do that.

ESSENCE: *What kind of action can you reasonably expect from parents in rich suburbs?*

Kozol: I don't think there will be any political changes on the strength of individual compassion. I don't think we'll see systemic changes growing for that sort of individual decency. We won't see them until one of two things happens: a major change in political leadership. I don't see that in the near future, even if a democrat wins in the fall. It will be slightly better. I hate to say this, but sometimes I have the grim feeling that nothing will change until white society is frightened again like in the late sixties.

....Just pray we'll have another generation of political leaders of the caliber of Dr. King and Malcolm X and Robert Kennedy and, at his best, LBJ. I was hoping somebody like Harkin or Kerry would come to power, someone of great conscience.

The only other possibility I see is the anger of these kids being redirected in the next ten years so that instead of killing themselves with crack and guns, they'll turn their anger outward. Not with violence, I hope.

The day thousands of Black kids appear on the sidewalk in front of Saks Fifth Avenue, not to smash windows but in dramatic protest, that's when the powerful people in this city will start to tremble. Then it will occur to them [that] it will be cheaper to be decent than [to] call out the National Guard. Jesse Jackson says in Connecticut it costs twice as much to send a kid to prison as to Yale. For a time the government may find it cheaper to punish and contain anger—it's more cost effective—than to get at the roots. But it will not work forever. This much anger can't be contained forever. It will explode.

When I saw what happened in L.A., I wasn't surprised. The only question is why it took so long. The amount of rage and anger building up inside these areas is greater than anything I've seen in the last 25 years. While naturally I'm dismayed by the violence and regret it very much, I'm not in the least shocked to see what happened. Not one bit. If these problems aren't addressed, we're going to see the same thing elsewhere—in New York, Chicago, Miami and other places.

WHAT WE CAN DO

How can we change things for our children? Jonathan Kozol and other educators recommend these steps:

- Make sure your school system offers preschool education, which has been shown to improve the likelihood of later school success.
- Make sure that your local Head Start is a full-day program available to 3-year-olds as well as 4-year-olds.
- Demand full-day kindergarten if it's not available .
- If there are more than 30 students in a classroom, demand that class sizes be lowered. Many suburban classrooms have no more than 18 students in a class.
- Look at the textbooks your child is using and make sure that they are current and genuinely multicultural, with more than a token picture of a tanned child every 20 pages .
- During Black History Month, insist that lessons go beyond Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington and include "fighters," such as Harriet Tubman, Fannie Lou Hamer and Malcolm X.
- Get to know the teachers. If they're good, give them support. If they're not, fight to get rid of them.

- Organize a strong Parent Teacher Association to begin letter-writing campaigns to local elected officials, demanding equality in school funding.
- Visit schools in nearby suburbs and see what they have that you are not getting in your schools.
- If you're not a parent, learn more about your local schools. Find out whether they can use your services as a volunteer or if you can provide other resources of help to them.
- Find out how candidates who are running for elected office stand on equity in school funding, and quiz them whenever you get the opportunity.
- If you are a business owner or member of a church or community-based organization, offer your resources to the local schools—and pressure the local politicians into doing more for the schools.
- If you are a member of a church or community group, start a group letter-writing campaign to state legislators .
- If you have access to the local newspapers, push for coverage of positive school events; push the newspapers to publicize school meetings and rallies.
- Find out how your school is funded and how much is spent per student. Compare what is spent on your child with what children in neighboring suburbs get. Then fight to make things equitable.
- In this election year, vote only for candidates who have the interests of African-American children foremost on their agendas.

Nick Chiles is an educational reporter for New York **Newsday**. *His article is reprinted from the August issue of* **ESSENCE** *magazine.*

TWO SCHOOLS

by Kevin Powell

Unequal state funding for education means unequal public schools and African American children are usually the losers. Our writer, Kevin Powell, discovered just how cruel the differences between public schools can be when he paid a visit to his predominantly Black alma mater and then dropped by a predominantly white suburban school. Here, two schools in the same state that are savagely unequal:

It is the first time I have visited Henry Snyder High School, in Jersey City since graduating in 1984. As I approach the long, sandy-colored edifice that covers a two-block area, I notice that one of the iron gates is lying on the lawn and that several letters are missing from the school's name above the entrance. Litter and broken glass clutter the lawn. Not much has changed in eight years.

As I approach the office of Mrs. Lillian P. Williams, the teacher I am visiting, the bell rings, and black and brown bodies rush into the hall. The school is not well lit, and that, combined with its aging, broken lockers, missing or tattered window shades, and half-painted walls, gives the school that "prison vibe" that students in my graduating class used to talk about.

Nearly all of the 1,167 students who attend Snyder High School are African-American and Latino. School officials claim that only 17 percent of the youngsters who attend Snyder High drop out and that nearly half of those who graduate will attend two- or four-year colleges. But parents say that far more youngsters drop out and far fewer attend college than school officials are willing to admit. There are eight guidance counselors in the school, but only three of them are African-American. There are no Black-male guidance counselors, but there are three Black-male vice-principals.

As Mrs. Williams, a short, meticulously dressed woman who has taught English at Snyder High for the past 22 years, guides me through the familiar corridors, I notice plaster blotches dotting the walls and I am told that the school is in the process of being renovated. I stop at the boys' bathroom, but it is locked. I ask a student why, and he explains it's because "niggas be fuckin' them up, smokin' and shit."

In the classrooms, most of the students sit slumped at their desks, passing notes, talking, sleeping and ignoring the teachers. The library is virtually empty save for a library attendant and one lone student who sits at a long table reading a sports magazine while listening to a Walkman radio. There are two computers. Much of the reading material is old.

As I enter a science class, a teacher explains that "we don't have enough equipment and we need to update what we have. Some of this stuff has been here for 30 years or more." He points to an electrical socket sitting near a water faucet and explains that it's dangerous for a water faucet to be positioned so close to all electrical socket.

In the school auditorium, wooden boards cover the entrance door where glass once was. The piano sounds untuned, and the auditorium looks as if it hasn't been refurbished since I graduated. The seats are covered with graffiti.

In the gymnasium, nets are missing from several basketball rims and some backboards don't have rims at all. Volleyball nets, worn from several years of use, hang limply. In the school detention area, there are huge holes in the walls and graffiti cover the doors. Snyder High's swimming pool has been broken for more than a decade, and there is no practice field for any of the sports teams. In the school cafeteria, students play cards, argue and eat lunch. A square-dance mat has been placed in the center of the cafeteria although, according to several students, "There ain't never no parties at Snyder High."

Mrs. Williams has strong words for Snyder High and the public-school system that supports it. "My feeling is that the people downtown are grandstanding," she says. "They really don't know or care about these kids. There is no incentive to come to school. We've lost a lot of students to the streets, but nobody talks about them."

A VISIT TO CHERRY HILL HIGH SCHOOL WEST:

As I walk through the first floor of Cherry Hill West, I can't help but notice how well lit, clean and modern it is. The school, located in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, is a spacious complex in a neighborhood filled with one-family homes and neatly manicured lawns. Since its erection in 1956, several structural additions have been made to the school. As a result, the wings of the building are lettered A through G.

There are 1,440 students at Cherry Hill West; the vast majority are white, but there are 89 African-Americans, 43 Latinos and 150 Asian students on the school roster. Of these students, 60 percent will attend four-year colleges, while another 20 percent will attend two-year colleges. According to the school's principal, the school employs five regular guidance counselors and two special counselors to handle things such as eating disorders, domestic violence, divorced families and drug and alcohol problems.

Among the amenities are a student-run school supermarket, an industrial-arts class that includes a computer-aided drafting program and a television station, which is equipped with the latest technology and has a 24-hour message board. Every Wednesday there are specially televised programs. The school also shares a huge practice field and a football stadium with Cherry Hill East, the district's other high school.

The library is the newest part of the school. It is a totally computerized facility featuring ProQuest, a program in which students can display virtually any news or magazine article and print it out. Each English class meets six times a week and students attend writing labs. In the labs students can place their essays into computers that will analyze them for grammatical mistakes.

"There's a lot offered to us here," observes Celia, a Cherry Hill senior. "No matter what you want to do with your life, Cherry Hill West has the courses and the extracurricular activities to help you. The teachers really care about us and go out of their way to prepare us for life."

EDITOR'S NOTE: *After reading our writer's account of the deplorable condition of Snyder High, we contacted school officials. They explained that the Jersey City schools were taken over by the state of New Jersey in October 1989 because for more than 20 years "successive administrations and local boards of education had failed to take corrective action to improve the schools." They also stated that conditions are in the process of being corrected by the district under state administrators, but that "decades of neglect prior to the takeover had left Snyder High School with massive work to be clone in the improvement of its physical plant."*

Kevin Powell is a freelance writer who lives in New York City. His article is also reprinted from the August issue of ESSENCE magazine.

SISTERS

Whether it be
High yellow
Caramel,
Or buggy-top black . . .

It doesn't
Bleach,
Scrub,
Or wish away.

It doesn't
Disappear by being
Interwoven with
Blond extensions
(synthetic or real),
Or hide behind
Blue, green or hazel
Contact lenses.

It doesn't
Melt with the sizzle
Of a hot comb
Or in the fire of
New and improved
Congolene.

It doesn't
Perish at the turn
Of an icy stare
In the mirror.

It does
Wait
Patiently
For the explosion
Of drums
Beginning the
Celebration
It deserves . . .

—VIVIAN JAMES

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A new champion of school reform has just burst upon my consciousness with dazzling intensity. Here is his letter of introduction:

Dear Mary:

Michael Traugot - or at least through his efforts - sent me a copy of ΣΚΟΛΕ and I would like to thank you both for it; it was wonderful reading, at least in part, because the concepts and ideas of alternative education are such a new thing to me.

My horizon has been expanded and, again, I thank Michael for his kindness and you for editing such a wonderful publication. Please also accept some of my publications - re: education and public education's bureaucracy - which I think you'll find interesting and perhaps, informative.

Kindest regards,
Carlos

P.S. I was, however, saddened by the - forgive me for saying this - petty B.S. going on between ΣΚΟΛΕ, Board members, dismissals, etc. Won't we humans ever learn??

AHORA, 3 Abril De 1992, Reno, Nevada

REFORM, CHOICE AND THE TEACHERS' UNIONS

by Carlos Bonilla

We have all heard the chant: "Power to the People"; well, I must state categorically that—in my opinion - if effective reform of the public school system is to ever take place, we must give:

Power to the students

Power to the principals

Power to the teachers

Power to the parents

Not necessarily in that order! And why, you may ask, do I say this?

Because these are the individuals who are in the thick of it, the ones who really know what is needed, what must be changed.

The Education Albatross hierarchy has, no doubt, had good intentions and has been more than willing to spend vast quantities of the taxpayers' money; but to no avail. The public school system establishment continues to fail in its primary function: To Educate.

Why? Because:

It continues to fail to put children first.

It remains a huge, awkward system of big organizations, big schools, housed in big buildings organized in the traditional top-down decision making ideology much like the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Army.

Regardless of its ineffective and unresponsive way of organizing learning, it continues to insist that local districts retain their Exclusive Franchise on the provision of public schools to the children of any community.

Now, finally, the public at large and the business establishment have had it! They are fed up with the hordes of illiterate, unskilled, socially maladjusted graduates from the public schools year after year. Granted many children succeed but they do so, not because of, but in spite of the system and through the competence and dedication of their teachers, their principals and even in some cases, their parents.

In my view, the national clamor for change, reform at any cost, a radical transformation of public (K-12) education is now stronger than ever. A transformed system which will place children and their needs at the top of the ladder, given the highest priority not the lowest!

Results of the 22nd Annual Gallup Poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools confirms this view; consider:

To the question:

Do you favor or oppose allowing students and their parents to choose which public schools in this community the students attend, regardless of where they live?

	Public school Parents	Non-Public school parents	National totals
Favor (%)	65	81	62
Oppose	30	14	31
Don't know (%)	5	5	7

Broken down further by other factors, results are just as striking:

	Favor (%)	Oppose (%)	Don't Know (%)
Race			
White	60	34	6
Non-White	72	18	10
Sex:			
Male	61	34	5
Female	63	29	8
Income:			
under $10,000	60	31	9
$10-20,000	60	30	10
$20-30,000	67	27	6
$30-40,000	62	32	6
over $40,000	59	37	4
Education:			
Grade school	44	43	13
High School			

graduates	66	28	6
College graduates	62	33	5

The results were very similar for different size communities going from those with populations under 2,500 (60% favor, 33% oppose) to cities of over 1 million (64% favor; 27% oppose). In all cases those in favor were 60% or greater.

So, let's summarize:

Where do we stand? Is there a need for drastic change?

Albert Shanker, president of the Nation's second largest teacher union, says that 95% of high school graduates cannot write a two-three page letter expressing several ideas - without mistakes in grammar or spelling.

Two-thirds (2/3) of high school juniors cannot place the civil war within the years 1850 to 1900.

Over one sixth (1/6) of high school seniors are incapable of finding the Soviet Union on a map.

Hard to believe!! Preposterous!! Shameful!!! Is there a need for reform? A resounding, unqualified Yes! And the need is critical to the economic survival of this nation.

Is the choice concept an integral plan of reform?

It could be, but only if it is debated, openly and honestly, without the self-serving rhetoric of the teachers' unions on one side and the dogmatic approach of choice proponents on the other.

In truth, we are all to blame for the sorry state of public education in this country today: parents, teachers, students, administrators and policy makers; to find solutions, we must all work together. The important question is: How can this powerful idea of Choice be used to improve the schools while retaining the essence of public education? States must be willing to provide both Choice: To help the student-and Choices: To help school districts change (reform?)

Choices: By removing the exclusive franchise which local school districts hold on public education; by allowing someone other than these franchisees to provide schooling, say a group under contract to a public agency. A competitive school system will only be achieved when a variety of public agencies are given the freedom to charter new schools, i.e.: states, existing districts, colleges, local governments, even the feds.

Choice: By allowing families to choose those schools which they feel would best educate their own children.

IDEA: What about giving teachers ownership of the new schools?

Carlos Bonilla

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The issue of vouchers, Choice, etc., is one about which people (many of whom claim to care about children as well as some who actually do!) differ tremendously in their opinions as to its effect. I've heard that the question is on the ballot now in Colorado, having been defeated in California. The whole issue gets mixed up with politics, with pro- or anti-Reagan-Bush sentiments (see, e.g., Jonathan Kozol's passionately partisan letter on the subject in the Winter, 1991 ΣΚΟΛΕ – and compare his strong statement in opposition to the America 2000 Bush Choice proposal in the Nick Chiles interview with Carlos Bonilla's equally passionate advocacy of his image of Choice in his Ahora article above. Who's right? I guess we'll find out. Here are some additional views:

REPRINTS (From Gene Lehman's LUNOletter): VOUCHERS, TAX CREDITS, FREEDOM OF CHOICE

The most troubling question about vouchers is whether government funding would bring government controls along with the money. As a financial conservative, I am philosophically opposed to the idea of giving away government money without proper accountability for how that money is used....The idea of tuition tax credits is arguably different. A tax credit means that the government is simply allowing us to keep a little more of our own money....I feel that a better approach to help all families is simply to allow *all* of us to keep more of our own money. Those with children would benefit more by increasing the personal exemption from $2000 to $3500 than by a tuition tax credit *and* without strings attached. (Michael Farris, president of Home School Legal Defense Association, Paeonian S Springs VA 22129; TEACHING HOME Aug/Sept '92, Box 20219 PORTLAND OR 97220; 503/253-9633)

The Media have at last grasped the fact that test scores and graduation rates improve where schools are freely chosen by families. But what many people still fail to appreciate is that the case for choice in education goes much deeper than market efficiency and the hope to overtake Japan. Shifting educational authority from government to parents is a policy that rests upon basic beliefs about the dignity of the person, the rights of children, and the sanctity of the family: it is a shift that also promises a harvest of social trust as the experience of responsibility is extended to all income classes...we still arrange education so that children of the wealthy can cluster in chosen government enclaves or in private schools; the rest get whatever school goes with the residence the family can afford....This socialism for the rich we blithely call "public"....admission to the government school comes only with the price of the house...parents are not necessarily good deciders. They are merely the best....

The machinery of public monopoly was chosen specifically by Brahmins like Horace Mann and James Blaine to coax the children of immigrants from the religious superstitions of their barbarian parents. Today that antique machinery continues its designated role, and if this function was ever benign, it has long since ceased to be so. What has endured is the public school system's peculiar legacy of intolerance, racial segregation, religious bigotry, discrimination against the poor, irrational fiscal distinctions among school districts, and - over against all this - the careful buffering of the freedom of the rich to decide for themselves. (School Choice as Simple Justice, John E. Coons, Prof. of law, U.C., Berkeley, FIRST THINGS, April '92, 156 5th Ave., NY, NY 10010 - 212/627-1985).

It is time to realize that in our rapidly changing world, the solutions from yesterday cannot solve the problems of our day....If our schools truly hope to become world class schools, the entire public school institution needs progressive 21st century reforms that will address the inherent problem of the current system: the bureaucratic, centrally controlled, state-run, monopolistic public school structure. The current public school system is designed for failure because it is protected from freedom of competition between schools. The division of Germany after World War II represents a sad, but poignant example of the different outputs achieved between a state-run monopolistic system and a free market economic system. Unfortunately, America's schools today are run like the old East German system centrally controlled, no competition, heavily laden with bureaucratic central planners....

It is time to tear down the Berlin Wall of the American educational system and allow free competition between schools, public and private. Parents of school-age children should be given the choice to send their child to any public or private school they wish. If the parent selects a private school, the state should fund the tuition up to 85 percent of the level of money that it would have spent educating that child in the public school system....A school system based on choice would provide inherent incentives for educators to increase performance and reduce wasteful inefficiencies....Giving parents the power to choose their child's school will also help reduce the pernicious inequality that currently exists....In today's stratified system, only the wealthy enjoy the freedom to select their child's school. (Bringing Down Education's Berlin Wall, Jeb Bush, co-chair of Floridians for Ed. Choice;REPUBLICAN LIBERTY CAUCUS, III:1, 1717 APALACHEE PARKWAY SUITE 434, TALLAHASSEE FL 32301)

LUNOletter breaks through barriers to communication, education and thinking, $10/yr. Booklets, $6., 3 for $5: PHONETIC BUILDING BLOCKS Do-it-yourself-Handbook (patterns for making color-coded block set with simple procedures and word lists for teaching sound/letter/word patterns); PHONETIC FUN FOR EVERYONE; PhF Elementary; PhF Intermediate; PhF Adv.; PHONETIC PATTERNS - WORD ROUTES(roots); ENGLISH TAUT OR NAUGHT - GRAMMAR FOR GROANUPS. Limer-Tricks on Portland TrailBlazers, $2. Exchange options. Learning Unlimited Network of OR, Gene Lehman 503/663-5153

From the SER (SOCIETY FOR EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION) Newsletter, sent by Bob Knipe:

Letter to the Editor

January 27, 1992

From: Bob Knipe --> **A man with a mission!**

Dear Mr. Yarbrough,

A couple of months ago I decided to join SER at the invitation of Dr. Angela Raffel. I then sent her a copy of a book entitled, *The Learning Community: the story of a successful mini-school*. It was written by two of the schools founders, James Pehna and John Agrak. It was located within what used to be Mater Christi Diocesan High School in Astoria, Queens. I attended this alternative school for only one year, 1975-76. But it opened my eyes to what education could really be about.

But sadly, after only four years, the school closed. This was due to pressure from the ultra conservative administration that had taken over Mater Christi. I have *never* forgotten the *anger, the sadness and helplessness* all of us felt in those last weeks. That is why today I am such a strong supporter of progressive/alternative education.

Not too long ago I saw a letter from a Washington, D.C. teacher in the National Coalition news, (Here is an excerpt from the letter:

> Dear NCACS,
>
> As a new subscriber to your bulletin, I am eager to learn more and become more involved in alternative schools. I am a teacher in an inner-city, all Black elementary school in D.C. While I find the goals of alt. ed. important, I find the results elitist. I feel frustrated when I read your newsletter and see pictures of well-to-do (at

least comfortable) white children romping, laughing, and exchanging ideas. Meanwhile, my kids are dodging bullets, watching their parents (usually only the mother is around) using and selling drugs, beginning to experiment themselves, living in shelters, coming to school hungry and with 4-5 hours of sleep. How can we teach?

I try to do more - introducing experiential education, developing self esteem, working on values clarification, making learning fun and relevant. But I find myself swimming upstream. My child-centered approach is often labeled too idealistic and futile. I believe deeply in the democracy of public education. In addition,

My challenge now is to find a group or organization which speaks to my situation, offers me support, and allows me to devote my energy and ideas to a larger movement. Any suggestions would be appreciated. Thank you. We're failing our beautiful, brilliant children. WE MUST ACT!

Valerie Wood

I sent her a copy of the "Learning Community" book as well. Then I decided to write to the Paulist Press, the publishing company that originally issued the "Learning Community" book. But they let it go out of print because of "slow sales". I told them that the book would be invaluable to educators everywhere. I even sent Xerox copies of Valerie Woods' letter to the NCACS. But from the answer I received, I gather that they're not really interested. But, I'm not giving up that easily. Anyone I give a copy of the "L.C." book to, I'll ask to write to the Paulist Press. Who knows, maybe then they will have second thoughts about it, but only time will tell. Wish me luck?

Bob Knipe

And from the Newsletter Bob sent me:

GOALS OF THE SOCIETY FOR EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

The Society for Educational Reconstruction (SER) is a voluntary non-political and nonreligious organization for encouraging personal, group, and social transformation through innovative and change-oriented education. SER was founded at Boston Massachusetts in 1969. It is incorporated as a non-profit. educational association in the State of Connecticut. Its membership consists of concerned citizens and educators in many parts of the United States and elsewhere in the world who are committed to the purposes of SER and wish to participate in activities designed to advance them.

Four central concepts shape the goals of SER:

COOPERATIVE POWER. SER is a support network for educators and citizens who function as social change activists. It encourages them to collaborate in order to assure that knowledge is being applied for moral purposes. It also seeks to aid them in overcoming the evil effects of ageism, racism. sexism, and other types of unfair discrimination in schools and society. SER members are involved in shared planning in order to achieve a better future for all humanity.

GLOBAL ORDER. Learning processes that respect human dignity and diversity are advocated by SER. Its members seek ways to end exploitation, violence, and nuclear proliferation in order to eradicate the chief causes of war by establishing social justice and world law. SER defends the right of all to dissent and be different. It helps its members to transcend the limitations of narrow ideological and national allegiances in order to form a more global outlook encompassing all of humankind.

SELF-TRANSFORMATION. Members of SER design and offer instruction that enhances the creative potential of both learners and teachers. They stress developing the skills needed for effective intercultural communication, conflict resolution. and mutual understanding. They work to reconstruct existing institutions so that they become more convivial and inclusive. They advocate learning experiences that promote holistic social selfhood.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. It is the contention of SER that educational and social decisions should be democratically made. Its members labor to achieve equal access to educational and employment opportunities for all. They urge corporations and government agencies to increase their socially beneficial and cease their harmful operations. They strive for a fairer distribution of the world's natural resources and wealth, as well as ecologically sound policies regarding them as we labor together to realize humanity's ideals and best utopian visions.

Current SER activities include:

-Engaging in local action research.

-Presenting educational reconstruction at conferences and professional meetings.

-Sponsoring seminars and symposia on alternative and humanistic education, nuclear conversion, and peace and development studies.

-Publishing the SER IN Action Newsletter.

LETTERS:

9/7/92

Dear Mary,

I received the latest issue of ΣΚΟΛΕ, and seeing the EMIT articles reprinted in the issue has made my year! I can't thank you enough! I was actually moved to tears. Yes, I'm still sad that the Learning Community had to come to such an abrupt end. However, I'm now filled with the hope that other schools like it might be founded in the future.

I look forward to visiting the Free School one day and meeting you and your staff and pupils. Once again, I thank you for helping me to keep the memory of the Learning Community alive.

Sincerely,
Bob Knipe

And, bringing it all back home:

(Dear Mom,)

I would like to be a patron at $50 a year. I began this issue (Summer, 1992) with the reading of both Chris' and Betsy's (Mercogliano) articles and was moved to issue the check as much from the sheer poetry of the writings (as anything else)—keep it up!

Peter (Leue - my son! Yay, Pete! And thanks!)

ADVERTISEMENTS:

***DUMBING US DOWN - The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*, by John Taylor Gatto, pb $15, New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA 19143.**

A collection of keynote speeches on schooling Mr. Gatto has given in 21 states as New York State Teacher of the Year,1991.

An autographed copy is available directly from the author. Send $15 to: John Taylor Gatto, 235 W.76th St. NYC,NY 10023.

HELP WANTED:

Can you help us get a grassroots campaign for school reform started by volunteering some time or sending a donation to help publicize the book and pay for the costs of Carnegie Hall?

Mail offers of assistance to: John Taylor Gatto, 235 West 76th Street, New York City 10023, or call 529-9327.

"The Exhausted School" is the first in a series of public information meetings about schools and education. We hope to open state monopoly schooling and state monopoly teacher certification to free market choices.

INSPIRING READING FOR TODAY'S EDUCATOR

What Are Schools For? Holistic Education in American Culture by Ron Miller, Ph.D.

This is the definitive history of holistic education and its pioneers over two centuries. Ron Miller editor of *Holistic Education Review*,, provides a thorough overview of the various educational movements founded on person-centered, progressive, global, and spiritual principles. Using a broad American Studies perspective, Miller explores the cultural worldview underlying mainstream American education and carefully describes, point by point, how holistic approaches offer a radical alternative. *What Are Schools For? is* a stirring call for a revolution in American

What Are Schools For?
ISBN 0-9627232-0-7
175 pp; $18.95 (quality paperback)

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Selections from *Holistic Education Review*

Have you missed the early issues of *Holistic Education Review*, "the number one journal in education today"? Here, in one volume, are thirty-three of the most stimulating and critical articles from the first ten issues of the *Review*—most of which are now out of print. The selections are thoughtfully grouped into five themes, covering the theory and practice of holistic education in all its diversity, and demonstrating its relevance to contemporary educational problems. This is a comprehensive reference book covering the scope of holistic education, an excellent textbook for courses in educational foundations, and delightful reading that will inspire teachers at all grade levels.

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Confronting the Challenges of the 1990s
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CONCENTRIC MEDIA
1070 Colby Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(415) 321-5590/fax (321-5633

THE ABORTION DILEMMA PROJECT
WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL: Untold Stories

The first broadcast of the 72 minute version of this project focusing on ILLEGAL ABORTION was televised in the Bay Area on July 27 and it was exceptionally well received! We are now finishing a half-hour 'pre-election special' which will be going out to PBS stations nationwide on the satellite.

Here is an update report about the program's premiere. On the lower half of this sheet I've done a quick overview of the results, plus quotes from letters which were sent to the station or to us.

Your efforts on behalf of the project (ranging from financial to feedback to words of encouragement to time and everything in between) continue to bear fruits, as they will in the coming year. Soon we will embark on further shooting and editing as we move toward producing the three part series. I cannot know in advance what impact seeing this film will have on undecided voters, but I have reason to be hopeful. One by one, I am beginning to get stories of people who have been mobilized to 'do something' by seeing the film, even though it is not a formal call to action.

Thanks again for your support.
Warmly,
Dorothy Fadiman

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO THE FIRST BROADCAST OF*WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL: Untold Stories*

• According to the Nielsen report, *WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL:* was the third best-watched single program KTEH has ever produced.

• Following the broadcast, the station received more than 150 phone calls and dozens of letters of appreciation. Only five of these nearly two hundred responses criticized the station for having chosen this topic.

• People from both Pro-Choice and Pro-Life positions called to express their views; the program was appreciated by people from both perspectives for its non-exploitive treatment of a subject which can so easily be sensationalized.

Excerpts from letters received in response to the
KTEH-TV San Francisco Bay Area Broadcast of
WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL - Untold Stories

"I kept thinking while watching this documentary how personal and real it was, honest and clear, sympathetic and helpful, 'political' in the best sense of the word. This is about people who've taken action on their conviction in such a compelling way, who communicate human need and urgency through their actions. It is easy to become jaded and bored or complacent and self-satisfied. It's much more difficult to remain so when shown another way of being in the world."

"***WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL*** injects a historical perspective into what has become an hysterical issue. I want to congratulate KTEH for having aired this impressive documentary."

"...While this film is about abortion, it represents the tip of the iceberg of many greater issues. This program addresses liberty and freedom, through understanding, compassion and wisdom."

"***UNTOLD STORIES*** tells a story which I do not know. At age 29, all my experience has been while abortion was legal. I am at a time in my life when I've chosen to evaluate my priorities. This important piece of history has been been absent from my intellectual analysis of the abortion issue. ***UNTOLD STORIES*** provided both insight and inspiration. Thank you."

"...painfully wonderful. Seeing the courage of the people interviewed in this documentary gave me courage."

TO: Friends of **THE ABORTION DILEMMA PROJECT**
FROM: Dorothy Fadiman - Independent Producer
RE: A half hour edited (PART I) version of the documentary to be on PBS stations this fall:

WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL:Untold Stories

PART I of ***WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL*** will be shown on PBS stations around the country this fall and will also be available on videocassette. I am writing to ask for your help in letting people know about the program. It is being released in two half hour parts. PART I will be available in early September. PART II will be available before the end of the year.

PART I (to be broadcast this fall):
Interviews (and other footage) with women who risked illegal abortions in the 30's, 40's, 50's, and 60's are interwoven with the stories of doctors and other courageous individuals who tried to help these women escape the trauma of back-alley and self-induced abortions. Remembrances of the women who underwent these abortions, as well as the memories of relatives of the women who risked - and lost - their lives, offer a poignant historical perspective on the emotional pain and physical danger of those times. The stories in this documentary reveal the profound social stigma which surrounded both unwed motherhood and criminal abortion before Roe vs. Wade.

PART II (will be available before the end of the year):
This second half-hour focuses on individuals and groups who took active stances in fighting for humane reproductive rights legislation There were doctors, clergy, and many others who worked both underground and overground to repeal restrictive laws, while providing women with referrals for the safest illegal abortions available. Many of these people risked arrest, and a number of the interviewees in our film actually were arrested for their courageous actions.

HELP BRING A SIGNIFICANT NEW DOCUMENTARY TO YOUR LOCAL PBS STATION THIS FALL OR WINTER:

Here's what you can do:

- **Call your local public television station, and let the Programming Department** (Program Manager or Assistant) know that you'd like them to broadcast ***WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL: Untold Stories***, a documentary based on interviews with women who had abortions during the times prior to Roe vs. Wade. It is best to speak as an individual and not on behalf of a group or organization.

- **Find out whether or not they have already set a broadcast date and time for this** program. If they have scheduled it, ask when the date will be. If they have not, ask how you can find out when the program will be broadcast.

- **Urge them to find a time as soon as possible**. Even though the issue will be particularly 'hot' before the election, it will not be possible for many stations to fit it in before November 3. The subject of abortion is definitely going to remain an important concern regardless of the outcome on November 3.

If you're not able to call your local station on the recommended dates, or if you do call and don't get to talk to the right person, please don't give up–they may not have set their schedule yet, or they may be willing to change it. A call--or a note--at any time will help get ***WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL: Untold Stories*** on the air.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT GETTING A VIDEOTAPE OF THIS DOCUMENTARY · WRITE TO:
CONCENTRIC MEDIA
1070 Colby Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025
FAX 415-321-5633

ALSO FROM CONCENTRIC MEDIA:

"WHY DO THESE KIDS LOVE SCHOOL?"

A BRILLIANT VIDEO by independent film-maker Dorothy Fadiman in conjunction with KTEH-TV, San Francisco

Five years in the making, the film covers visits to several alternative schools starting with an in-depth look at Peninsula School, Menlo Park, California, then moving on to six other schools across the country. The overview of alternative schooling is stunning in its effect, reflecting the meticulousness of Mrs.. Fadiman's understanding of her subject as well as her total love of what she is filming.

If you have a need to explain to anyone what it is about alternative education that is so magnificent, show her/him this film!

You can obtain a copy by writing to:

Concentric Media
1070 Colby Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
or call (415) 321- 5590

FROM DOWN-TO-EARTH BOOKS:

CHALLENGING
THE GIANT
THE BEST OF ΣΚΟΛΕ
The Journal of Alternative Education
Mary M. Leue, Editor

"Mary is one of the most brilliant educators in the country who has kept alive the progressive tradition all through the Reagan and Bush years. She is one of the strongest voices for children in this country."

-Jonathan Kozol, author, advocate of alternative education

Responding to the distress of her ten-year-old son, Mary Leue decided to start The Free School, which is now one of the longest running inner city independent alternative schools in the nation. Influenced by the father of anarchism Prince Pyotr Kropotkin, by Mahatma Gandhi, and by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., she firmly believes that open democratic education should be available to the children of the poor as well as those of the middle and upper classes.

Mary Leue created ***ΣΚΟΛΕ*** seven years ago in that same spirit. *Challenging the Giant* is a collection of exciting and thought-provoking articles from this Journal, presenting a broad spectrum of perspectives on this phenomenon that has been called "alternative.". Such offerings *include*

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ΣΚΟΛΕ

THE JOURNAL OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

A.S. Neill, by Isabel McWhirter

Summer, 1993
Vol. X, No. 2

ΣΚΟΛΕ

the Journal of Alternative Education

Vol. X, No. 2
Summer, 1993

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DOWN-TO-EARTH BOOKS
ALBANY, NEW YORK

ΣΚΟΛΕ

the Journal of Alternative Education

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ΣΚΟΛΕ ("Sko-lay," meaning "school" as defined by the ancient Greeks, an activity conducted on an on-going basis, as part of the awakening of awareness and contact with one's world) appears twice a year. It publishes articles related to the subject of alternatives or innovations in education, critiques of other forms of education, theoretical considerations associated with schools, schooling, learning and teaching, as well as accounts of individual schools themselves and "how-to" articles. We welcome manuscripts by educators, interested by-standers, parents and thoughtful students of all ages. Interesting photographs showing activities connected with learning/teaching are in great demand. I used to say they wouldn't be returned, but I haven't been getting any at all - so now I will, I will! Please send me some pictures!

Material to be submitted for publication must be received by the November 15 and May 15 deadlines. Manuscripts will not be returned unless extreme emotional blackmail has been practiced by the author, and should be typed with nice black type. Best of all, put them on a Mac, and send us a disk! Send your material to Mary Leue, 72 Philip St., Albany, NY 12202.

Subscription rates are: $15/yr. for members of the National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools or subscribers to Jerry Mintz's networking newsletter AEROGRAMME, $20 for non-members. For institutions the rates are $20/$25. For overseas subscription, add $10/yr. for mailing. Send international money order, please, or something else that can be negotiated in the U.S. Back issues of **ΣΚΟΛΕ** may be ordered from the above address, at $ 8.00 a copy.

Cover sketch of A.S. Neill by Isabel McWhirter was taken with permission from the 70th Anniversary issue of the *Friends of Summerhill Trust Journal* for March, 1991.

Editorial Comment:

The Winter, 1992, issue of *ΣΚΟΛΕ* was focused on community as school/school as community. The Summer, 1992, issue just past was about the environment - both human and natural - as an urgent political/spiritual issue.

The focus of this issue is in a sense a continuation of both previous subjects, centering on education as representing some pretty painful, tough issues, not simply as a situational matter with problems reducible to management questions. I would like to sum up what for me is always the core of this issue, the very thing it seems to me everyone hopes to by-pass. That is the issue of personhood.

It is my profound and perennial belief that any process in which truly life-threatening, life-involving problems are being addressed - and this level of involvement may be latent or it may be overt within the fabric of our individual perspective on the problem - is inextricably woven into our single and our collective personhood, and must be looked at as such. Not to do so is to miss the target - the solving of the problem - in some significant respect!

I don't watch a whole lot of TV, but I did happen to have it on this morning at a time when Brian Gumbel was interviewing an odd couple - a personable-looking, youngish man with white hair and a gentle manner and a small black boy perhaps ten or eleven years old. The man was Victor Maul, an AIDS sufferer, by his own admission, from San Francisco, and Rudy Campbell, a black Latino boy from Los Angeles. Victor is sponsoring Rudy in his school studies with the goal of going to college. He remarked that he was amazed that this simple act of his had become a nationally publicized story, and expressed the fear that we have begun to lose sight of a fundamental truth about life in this country - that enjoyment of the giving of oneself, one's heart, one's talents, to another human being is the only real basis for both problem-solving and real personal fulfillment in life.

OK, how does this Sunday School attitude relate to the theme of this issue of ΣΚΟΛΕ? Isn't it going against human nature to insist that problem-solving *per se* is fruitless, and that the only truly significant issue is goodness of heart? No, I don't think so. I really believe each of us has the same essential or core nature - that, as Donne says, "No man is an Island , each is a part of the Main." This being so, and not simply a formulaic truism, how does such a principle manifest itself in dialogue - or fail to do so?

And now we're back to the contents of *ΣΚΟΛΕ*. The "special section" part of this issue centers around a running discussion among Ron Miller, Pat Farenga and John Taylor Gatto in *Holistic Education Review* which springs from Ron's favorite dichotomous characterization of educational reformers as "libertarians" and "greens." If you've forgotten what he said, look back at his splendid review of John's *Dumbing Us Down*, starting on page 130. In that winter issue I made an initial inroads into Ron's classifications by pointing out some of the roots of the distinction in terms of "statism versus anti-statism," politically and strategically as well as in terms of educational orientation. In this issue I have reprinted John's length and eloquent response to Ron's review. Additionally, as part of an overall review of *HER*, Chris Mercogliano continues the discussion centering around this issue.

In the winter issue, I reprinted an article by Dan Sullivan called "Greens and Libertarians: The Yin and Yang of our Political Future," from *Green Revolution*, the quarterly periodical of the School of Living. Of the two minority political parties known by those names, Dan said there,

> Greens advocate ten key values (ecological wisdom, grass roots democracy, social justice, nonviolence, decentrali-zation, community-based economics, post-patriarchal values, respect for diversity, personal and global responsibility, and sustainable future focus as a guide for government as well as for their own party organization.) These different guidelines underscore basic differences between the approaches of the two parties and their members. Libertarians tend to be logical and analytical. They are confident that their principles will create an ideal society, even though they have no consensus of what that society would be like. Greens, on the other hand, tend to be more intuitive and imaginative. They have clear images of what kind of society they want, but are fuzzy about the principles on which that society would be based.
>
> Ironically, Libertarians tend to be more Utopian and uncompromising about their political positions, and are often unable to focus on politically winnable proposals to make the system more consistent with their overall goals. Greens on the other hand, embrace immediate pro-

> posals with ease, but are often unable to show how those proposals fit in to their ultimate goals.
>
> The most difficult differences to reconcile, however, stem from baggage that members of each party have brought with them from their former political affiliations. **Most Libertarians are overly hostile to government and cling to the fiction that virtually all private fortunes are legitimately earned. Most Greens are overly hostile to free enterprise and cling to the fiction that harmony and balance can be achieved through increased government intervention...**(emphasis mine).
>
> There is nothing mutually exclusive between the ten key values of the Greens and the principles of the Libertarians. **By reconciling these values and principles, we can bring together people whose allegiance to truth is stronger than their biases** (emphasis mine). This could be of great value to both parties, partly because any new party that wants to break into a two-party system has to appeal to a broad spectrum of voters. But even more importantly, each party needs attributes the other has to offer. **Libertarians need the intuitive awareness of the Greens to keep them from losing touch with people's real values, and Greens need the analytical prowess of the Libertarians to keep them from indulging in emotional self-deception.**

And Dan added:

> Reconciliation is absolutely necessary. Even if one of the parties could rise to power, it could do great harm by implementing its current agenda in disregard for the perspective of the other. Moreover, proposals that violate values and principles of one party often violate those of the other. **If members of both groups come together to discuss each other's proposals, they are likely not only to find areas of agreement, but to find conflicts between each group's proposals and its own principles** (emphasis mine).

When I look at the actual issues that set off the white-hot passions of these magnificent educational reformers - Ron, John, Pat - which have resulted in such powerful feelings of disconfirmation on both sides, it seems clear to me that each advocate is expressing a totally legitimate perspective of his own, and that what seems to be happening is that he is being seen by the other as in some major respect discrepant or deficient, from that person's viewpoint, and therefore wrong. I believe they are in fact right about this in most cases. But what happens then is that attempting to correct this discrepancy seems in itself to mandate a dialectical response, which in turn is seen as wrong-headed - probably also rightly so! And so it goes, with neither person tryly listening to the other, learning from him. In Harry Stack Sullivan's terminology, there is no 'consensual validation' going on.

What is actually going on, at a deep level, is, I believe, a kind of defensive reaction set off by initial hurt feelings. Unfortunately, this feeling of disconfirmation seems to get turned into one-upmanship! But, you know, no one perspective is right or wrong! They are all right, within their own parameters - and they are all incomplete without the synergistic input of all the other perspectives!

Chris Mercogliano's review of the gamut of subjects and issues tackled by *Holistic Education Review* necessarily stresses the significance for educational reform of this passionate dialogue among these three educational opinion-makers - John (whose letter to HER is reproduced on page 128), Ron and Pat.

Ken Lebensold's thoughtful reply to my open letter to him (which exchange starts on page 148) also touches on the same subject.

And, in case you aren't familiar with the image - although that is hard to imagine! - the sketch on the cover is one of A.S. Neill, founder of Summerhill, done by Isabel McWhirter, 1966, taken from the cover of the 70th anniversary issue of the Friends of Summerhill Trust Journal. Isn't it great? You may join *Friends of Summerhill Trust* by writing them at Barclay's Bank, 19 Main St., Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4HY, U.K. Send a donation of, say, $25, to include the cost of a subscription to the Journal, by international money order. The Trust is terribly important to the school in providing badly needed extra money for maintenance and renovation.

SCHOOL PROFILES:
East Hill School, in Andover, VT:

Schooling As If Children Mattered:
Thirty-five years On East Hill
by Jonathan Bliss

My father [Dick Bliss], in a question aimed more at himself than at his audience, once asked a group of East Hill parents, "Why school?", which some of those present took to mean: What could we possibly teach children that would help them live in this strange and often pathological world?

Being a provoking man, he might have responded to his own question a number of ways, but the answer he lived for 35 years was East Hill Farm.

In 1957 my parents bought 300 acres in Andover, Vermont, and the following year opened a summer program with four children, only two of whom paid tuition. The kids swam in a muddy pond, rode a borrowed horse, and built their own cabins. My father liked to remember that when the farm had visitors, he'd tell the four kids to slip from one activity to another, hoping the guests would fail to notice that all the children looked alike on what he called "this pimple of a place."

The birth of my older brother Andrew in 1960 lent an urgency to my parents' work. Significantly "retarded," Andy would clearly require something more than the local public school. My parents were appalled by institutions for the retarded and mentally ill, and I doubt this approach was ever a real option in their minds. They were told he might not live past the age of twelve, but they sensed Andy had a chance if they could give him useful work and membership in a safe and thoughtful community.

Word of East Hill's summer program spread during the sixties, but in an early letter to his sister my father speaks of wanting "a total approach to the problem of growing up." The decision to open a school evolved —among other things —out of my parents' realization that a working school community might help them raise their own family well. By the same token, the process could involve other children in a "small society," one with its share of problems and possibilities.

An East Hill day began early, with chores: milking, making breakfast, cleaning, cutting wood. Everyone participated. The person in Charge for the day assigned the jobs. As on many farms, breakfast was a respite and a breathing space. The food was simple, whole, and usually plentiful—barring a major error by the cooks! As the day students arrived, everyone gathered for circle dances; "Hora" from Israel, "Zimmeratik" from Greece, "Road to the Isles" and "Going Down to Cairo" from the British Isles and America.

Next came singing and morning meeting, a time for the group to take stock of itself and its responsibilities. Between songs we heard from the inspectors, two kids who had looked the farm over for cleanliness and orderliness. Volunteers went to tidy up areas that fell short. A student read the rule for the day: "When going into the woods to work, there should be at least three people..."; "Pots and pans should be washed in the large sink..." Announcements were made and concerns aired.

My father regularly used this time to re-focus the farm community. "Dick's lectures" were always sparked by—but never confined to—things directly at hand. Was the farm working together? Were individuals treating each other with respect? He called these surface indicators "tone," and was more concerned about them than almost any other element in the day.

It was sometimes hard for visitors to see the connection between my father's leadership style and the intensely independent culture he was nurturing. In a school more democratic than most, his central role sometimes seemed a contradiction to outside observers. In fact, he knew that democratic principles, however high-minded, can always be manipulated by cynics, and he spoke more often of justice and compassion than of votes and the ruling majority. He was something of an heir, albeit a skeptical one, to the great headmasters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in that "head" connoted moral center, steward, facilitator, counselor, and goad. His influences included Gandhi, Jefferson, and Eugene Debs, and he often quoted St. Benedict's Rule to the effect that a good Abbot listens as closely to the junior monks as he does to the seniors. He had large ears for the difficulties of growing up; he also had plenty to say, and often said it. When asked about his attitude toward kids, his response might be: "they need to know where I stand."

He understood the power of metaphor, and balanced every direct confrontation with a story. There was the Enoch Puffer saga, about a young boy from Andover who explores America during and just after the Civil War; stories from my father's own history, of World War II and his coming of age; and the legendary Hunt Carlyle, an Andover boy who did **not** leave town, but remained behind to know and love it. Somehow—I things it was partly a strain of skepticism that complemented his idealism—my father managed the trick of dealing with morality without seeming above his own rhetoric. And Hunt and Enoch worked their way into farm tradition as touchstones for generations of East Hill kids.

"Hot blood is better than cold blood" was one of his favorite sayings, and somehow, paradoxically, this was a guiding principle for a man who called himself a pacifist. His critique, whether gentle or urgent, was always on target. He could (and often did) exasperate us all, but you could not dismiss him. People have spoken of his "passion," which it was, but informed by close observation and a good sense of timing. "There were times when I wanted to kill him," a former student said not long ago, "but as I think back I understand exactly why he was the way he was. Of all the influences in my life, he and East Hill are at the head of the list. His example of involvement, the way he insisted that we care for each other, is something I try to bring to everything I do."

When morning meeting was over, the group separated for classes. This is one of the most difficult aspects of the farm to write about, not because it wasn't important or effective, but because it was integral. A basic notion of my father's was that you couldn't divorce intellectual growth from psychic growth any more than you could physically separate the head from the rest of the body. Consequently, the reader is warned that anything I say about academics in particular will lead to an impression of fragmentation, something we tried at all costs to avoid at East Hill.

The structure of the farm's academic life was never rigidly set, and took many forms through the years. By the mid-80s, though, a general daily routine had been established. Class groups were composed so that group dynamics interfered as little as possible. This meant they were inter-aged, mixed-ability groupings, usually of from 6 to 10 kids. The curriculum was based on the Core idea, with the defining subject changing yearly--the Greeks, then Native American culture, then medievalism, then the Arabs, then discovery and trade, then industrialism. On Mondays, Dick or another teacher presented the older students with a lecture-story on that year's subject. Those of us who gave Core lectures tried to make our expositions visual and dramatic. It took only a few days at East Hill for a teacher to realize that kids respond to people, not discrete "facts."

For the rest of the week, the individual groups explored material presented in the story-lecture session, and followed students' interests. The idea was that looking intently at the Native Americans, for example, opened a door through which you gained access to a wide range of subjects: sacred ritual, hunting practices, building techniques, modes of travel, botany and the natural sciences, art, warfare, the dynamics of language, inter-cultural experience, mythology. Often, there were almost too many possibilities, and class groups faced the challenged of focusing.

As much as possible kids were given a role in directing their own work. Pacing was individual. In a small, inter-aged, mixed-ability group, it was clear when one student was ready for an essay, and when someone else needed more time to draw. The job of the teacher was to help kids find materials, to lead discussion--and to know when it was time for recess! Math practice took place in tutorials or on work jobs. I learned fractions from Mike at the end of a two-by-our. We were building a shed, and I needed a board three feet nine and a quarter inches long. "Look," he said , "just find the half-inch mark, then divide it—this way."

We took flak from skeptical academicians and nervous parents because we placed academics in context, rather than allowing this part of a child's school experience to dominate. Most people—including the participants—agreed that kids here were, with a few exceptions, interested in being on the farm and alive to the possibilities it offered. I remember my amazement when I first talked to survivors of other high schools, and discovered how it had been for them. I had never liked **all** parts of my academic experience equally, but it had never occurred to me that being in school could be boring.

Wednesday, at mid-week, was music day. All morning kids gave and received lessons in recorder, guitar, piano, and violin. Every corner of our venerable Main House echoed. It was not literally true, as we often said, that everyone on the farm played an instrument. No one was coerced, and a few kids opted to work in the shop or at outside jobs on music day. But better than two thirds of the group usually played. The noon meal divided indoor activities from the wider, freer scope of the farm outside. Following reading aloud and a wild half-hour of active and (mostly) non-aggressive games, the afternoon was devoted to outdoor work—weeding in the garden, fencing, cutting wood, carpentry—and wood working, hiking, and art. Older kids led crews. The general theme was stewardship: the work of caring for the land, preparing for winter, or getting ready for the next farm festival. Balance was crucial. As on most farms, there was always more labor to be done then there were qualified workers, but for many eight year olds, finding the best climbing tree is work. Equally important, eight year olds need sixteen year olds to guide them—and vice versa. In the end we had to hold all work against a common standard: did it advance a positive farm tone, and was it creative?

From the beginning, each person over 14 took her or his turn being In Charge. This was a student's most hotly anticipated (and dreaded) responsibility. Visitors who suggested it was ceremonial—"Dick runs the farm, after all"—missed the point. Kids were responsible initially to Dick for every aspect of the day. As they grew in the job they responded to challenges implicit within any group or community, challenges no teacher could or should manufacture. Everyone had to be awakened thoughtfully, to get the day off to a good start. If you wanted a decent meal, you couldn't have two rivals on the breakfast crew. The guitar player for morning singing had to be right for the day—a strong leader for visitors, otherwise perhaps a novice and her teacher. If you wanted a successful afternoon, you began setting it up in the morning, finding crew leaders, checking materials. You talked to people before you asked a favor of them, you got a sense of the mood before you took command. You were consistent. In other words, you learned that respect is earned, and you learned to honor the possibilities and limitations of power.

If this was empty ceremony, it didn't feel like it at the time.

Over the years we observed a number of festivals and occasions, and by the late 80s had settled on five major celebrations: Halloween, Advent, Christmas, Passover, and May Day. Each one had its own rhythm, a mixture of tradition and innovation. The common thread was an attempt to give a part in the celebration to each person on the farm. A good festival has room for actors, cooks, carpenters, musicians, and spectators. As a group which varied widely in age and ability, religion and temperament, we were each obliged to take seriously the task of making traditional festivals our own. When an East Hill celebration worked, we saw a critical element of folk culture in action: a feast day allows a participant to play a part, and a part can work its way into your blood. The jester mugs for the crowd, and discovers his own humor and frivolity... the King Of The Day revels in his power, and is shown its responsibilities... Lady Marion speaks her lines from the text of the play and suddenly it is not a play, but a moment full of vitality and consequence.

In many ways, our attempts to make a festival work reflected East Hill's core: everyone had to be **engaged** for the enterprise to sustain belief, and adults could claim little credit for the most significant personal transformations.

The farm closed as a school in 1989 during a bad period in my father's last illness. Since then, we have had time to think about thirty-five difficult and exhilarating years. What did East Hill accomplish? It's hard to say. The things the farm stood for can't be measured in test scores and surveys of conventional achievement. On the other hand, people who spent time here can speak about things which matter to them now: success in relationships, fulfillment in work, clarity. They alone can say whether East Hill proved helpful in these areas. As I think about what we were and what we still are, it is clear that the farm offers room to breath, and time. Visitors used to ask if we minded being cut off from the "real world"—as if there is such a thing, and as if you can be cut off from it! The farm was, and is, a microcosm; with all the challenges of the society beyond its borders, it brings reality close, and helps focus our lives.

What's ahead? More than ever, we need to engage children in bringing their own society into being. It hardly needs to be said that vital kids reflect our hope for a better world, and are the means of its achievement.

As for my brother, Andy can work the farm from the milking barn to the hay field, and on vacation he explores Long Island's Hallock's Bay in a 12 foot outboard skiff.

He calls her "Victory," a name which says it all.

More on Arthur Morgan School, in Burnsville, NC:

ARTHUR MORGAN SCHOOL AS AN EDUCATIONAL MODEL

by Jeff Goldman

What is it that makes the Arthur Morgan School work? How do we meet the specific needs of today's kids? The most recent debate about the state of education in this country has led me to wonder what role a successful alternative school like AMS has in the process of educational reform, especially at the middle education level.

Initially, the fact that AMS is a staff-run school led me to believe that our educational approach would be modified each year according to the consensus of the staff. In fact, I have been struck over time, not by what has changed, but by how much has stayed the same. Ultimately, I trace the consistency of the school's philosophy to the very fact that what we do is dependent on a group process, rather than on fixed dogma. It is the involvement of the students and staff at AMS with our surroundings and with each other that is the defining feature of the school. I have come to believe that it is this sense of involvement -- for both teachers and students -- that makes Arthur Morgan School work. As I have been able to define the reasons behind our success, I have begun to see how AMS might be used as an educational model elsewhere.

Now, more than ever, we need schools which allow students to be involved with the world around them in real ways. The lives of most children today, both at home and in school, provide few opportunities for them to do meaningful work.

Kids are for the most part, adjunct members of society: at best, unnecessary, at worst, a burden. Television, video games and other forms of electronic entertainment dominate the lives of many children; they are growing up passive, unconnected and uninvolved. While the society values self-confidence, creativity and responsibility, there is little in the experience of most children to help them foster these qualities.

In contrast to the structure of most schools, AMS is set up in a way which facilitates student involvement in all aspects of the school's functioning. The physical work that students do at AMS is perhaps the most significant part of the education here. Through our work program that are both learning specific skills -- how to cook, clean, maintain vehicles, split wood, etc. -- and they are having an opportunity to do work which matters to themselves and others. The work we do is not arbitrary: the wood we cut keeps us warm in the winter, and the roofs we repair keep us dry. In addition to our own work projects and chores, we try to frequently incorporate community service work into our program so that students find value not only in the work from which they personally benefit, but also from that which helps others. Experiences such as serving food in soup kitchens, picking up trash, and planting trees, give us a feeling of connection to the larger community which, like all of our work experience, translates into a sense of belonging and self-esteem.

Academic classes at Arthur Morgan School also afford an opportunity for students to be actively involved in the learning process. Whereas the instruction in a traditional classroom is controlled and directed by the teacher -- often in conjunction with a text and a chalkboard -- our hands-on academics allow students to see how the material they are learning relates to the world around them. Thus, in Science class, the steaming of a bathroom mirror provides an opportunity to explore the physics of condensation. Likewise, students in English and Social Studies classes learn how to write because they are encouraged to communicate ideas that are important to them. Math classes seize every opportunity to apply math in the real world: from figuring angles and measurements for a construction project to keeping track of the finances on a group trip. In addition, our hikes and three-week field trips remind us all that education does not have to stop at the school's boundaries. Too many schools treat learning as the transfer of information from the teacher to the student, a process which does not involve the students or value their experiences or interests. At Arthur Morgan School, we try to give students access to their own learning so that they can come to see education as a reaffirmation of who they are and how they fit in -- not as one more thing imposed on them by adults.

Our attempt to keep everyone here connected to the basic processes of the school extends to our decision-making process. The non-hierarchical nature of our faculty means that teachers are empowered to create curricula and implement programs, and empowered teachers tend to create an atmosphere of empowerment for students. Our All School Meeting gives students a direct say in the running of the school: they plan activities, deal with interpersonal problems and give feedback on interviews. While there are a few standing rules at AMS, each year students help set guidelines in response to specific problems. This process is not without its difficulties -- most of us are more familiar with social systems which use chains of power -- and it takes time to get used to a cooperative system. For one thing, it requires us all to take responsibility for one another's actions and see how those actions affect the entire community, and this is difficult for people who are used to living lives in which they are isolated and responsible only for themselves. However, by taking part in group decision-making and problem-solving, every person has access to a community which includes them and values their contribution.

Elizabeth Morgan recognized that the Arthur Morgan School program would be specifically suited to the needs of young adolescents. The outcome of such an environment is that students not only show marked changes when they are here, but, as I have gathered from numerous AMS graduates, tend to continue to be active, self-motivated people after they leave. Children who take part in an educational process which values them come to value themselves. As their self-esteem develops, so does their creativity, which, by nature, requires a willingness to take risks. And children who have been given the opportunity to be a part of a community and develop solutions to problems will apply these skills to conflicts throughout their lives.

While teenagers are particularly needy of a feeling of "place" in a society which seems to have no use for them, the need to feel necessary and involved transcends age boundaries.

All of us need to be given a chance to see that we matter, that we have something to contribute. I can attest to the fact that AMS works the same magic on staff as it does students. The non-hierarchical nature of the staff allows teachers here to experiment, learn and grow in the same ways as students. The result is an environment which models education as a life-long process.

The success of Arthur Morgan School is related to our small size and rural environment but there is much in our experience that would translate to any school. Today's educational system, modeled on the factories of the late nineteenth century, is failing to provide for the needs of students and teachers. The society must come to think of schools and education in a new way. Through physical work, hands-on academics, and shared decision-making, both students and teachers must be allowed to feel connected to the basic processes of their school and their world. The model provided by the Arthur Morgan School has been tested for thirty years and deserves attention.

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Paul Feist, Class Acts editor

THE STOCKTON (CA) RECORD

KOHL OPEN SCHOOL IN FOREFRONT OF EDUCATION REVOLUTION

by Dana Nichols

The six soft-spoken teachers at Kohl Open School may be prophets in their own land.

For 19 years, Kohl has been an oasis of learning without the bells, drills and regimentation of traditional schools. Classrooms mix students of different ages, and the school's 180 children choose when and where to work on their assignments.

In the last three years, the teaching methods used by Kohl suddenly have come into vogue. Schools across America are scrambling to copy the cozy, homelike atmosphere of the six classrooms at 6324 Alturas Ave. in Stockton.

As a result, Kohl phones have been ringing with invitations to speak at conferences and requests from educators eager to visit the campus. In the next month, for example, Kohl Head Teacher Bud West and other faculty will make presentations at California Department of Education conferences on elementary school reform and mentor teachers.

In fact, Kohl has been getting questions and invitations from everywhere in California except Stockton itself. Other than a few teachers who have recently visited from Hazelton and El Dorado schools, Manteca is the closest community to show any formal interest in Kohl's successes.

"It's not uncommon for innovative schools to receive less attention at home than elsewhere," said Herbert Kohl, the school's namesake and a nationally known education innovator.

Kohl, who says he is embarrassed that the school was named after him, advised the faculty during the early years of the school's operation. He says that the lack of attention given to Kohl has deep roots.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Herb Kohl

"It is because Kohl exists despite the district, not because of it," Kohl said.

Education-reform advocates at other Stockton schools said they felt mildly embarrassed to admit they had not visited Kohl.

"In the back of my mind, I have had that feeling I've got to get to Kohl School," said Ward Downs, a teacher deeply involved in restructuring at El Dorado School. El Dorado, in fact, has adopted a system of families designed to break students and teachers into four small schools, each about the size of Kohl.

"I know it's there. I've never paid enough attention to it, but I will be going to visit," said Lou Womble, director of multilingual and compensatory education for Lincoln unified School District.

Officials at Kohl and other schools noted the school's small size and the fact that it is a magnet also make it more difficult for teachers in more traditional schools to see Kohl as a model. As a magnet, Kohl only serves students from families that choose to participate in the program.

More fundamental, however, is that the school's methods have only recently been seen as within the mainstream of educational thought, said West.

"We've had a reputation of sort of left-wing oddballs that took a long time to get over" West said.

Students at Kohl also see the contrast between what happens at their school and what happens in conventional classrooms.

"You can work at your own pace," said Brandon Zulueta, 9.

Katie Frampton, 10, recently transferred to Kohl from Village Oaks School in Lincoln Unified School District. She said she believes it will be challenging for teachers in conventional schools to adopt innovations such as those used at Kohl.

"I think it would be hard for them to understand," Frampton said. But, she added, she thinks the original Kohl teachers also faced challenges. "I bet when they first started they weren't quite into it," Frampton said.

West confirmed Frampton's speculation. It took years, for example, to achieve the right balance between giving students freedom to move around and preventing them from wasting time, West said.

Teacher Janet Ratto, who transferred to Kohl three years ago from a conventional parochial school, said it turned her world upside down when she saw how much more children could learn in an open school.

"It caused me to reorganize my thinking about teaching completely," Ratto said.

Kohl, the person, said he is proud to see that his namesake has prospered. And he said he hopes that others in Stockton will take advantage of Kohl teachers' experience. Not to do that would be wasteful," Kohl said.

MORE ON THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL IN CAMDEN, MAINE:

Intimacy, Connectedness, and Education

by Emanuel Pariser

This article is based on seventeen years of teaching, learning, and living with high school students who have left school before graduating. Our experience at The Community School, a small, residential alternative school, has suggested that these students' successful education is the result of a learning environment which provides an experience of intimacy and connectedness. By intimacy I mean a sense of emotional closeness between two or more people.

In his foreword to John Holt's seminal work *How Children Fail*, Allan Fromme writes:

> What does the child hear when he is called on? What does he feel? What does he think?....What does the teacher think and feel and do as he awaits the answer? ..Does his relationship with the child have the intimacy ideally necessary for intellectual growth or is it a dull contractual one which fosters non-learning as much as it does learning?.....

Teachers can be no more successful in their classrooms than they can be in their marriages without this quality of sensitivity. The reason for this is that there is as much *intellectual intimacy* in the teaching-learning relationship as there is *emotional intimacy* in the husband-wife relationship.[1]

Taking Fromme's point a little further I would add that *both* emotional and intellectual intimacy have been prerequisite learning conditions for our students, many of whom have experienced long histories of social and academic failure. The presence of these forms of intimacy in The Community School has led them to a sense of connectedness: with themselves with other people, and with the larger community.

In this article I will examine how a school can foster the necessary sense of intimacy and connectedness in its educational process, and what the ramifications are of making these elements primary ingredients of an educational approach. The students, programs and situations described below are all taken from experiences at The Community School; it is my hope that their explication will be useful to others in all forms of education.

The Need for Intimacy:

Many students need to experience closeness because there has not been enough of it in their lives. As they move from personal failure to academic and social failure, their intellectual abilities become neutralized or redirected towards finding a "way out" of their intolerable lives.

A social worker referred Tracy to The Community School six months after her second suicide attempt. She was 18 years old, had left school as a junior, was a heavy drinker, and had lived through a long series of depressingly self-destructive and abusive relationships.

She was disconnected from her family and out of touch with her own feelings. Her life was chaotic. She knew that finishing school and getting a high school diploma was "important". She was accepted at the school as a "long-shot," since in the past two years she had never lived in one place for more than a couple of months.

Students like Tracy are products of failed human relationships and failed institutional remedies. Their families did not provide them with the love they needed to develop as children; as teenagers these students find it terrifying to accept love when it is offered. Their lives alternate between seeking the intimacy which never materialized in their childhood, and fleeing from the pain of intimate relationships in the present.

These adolescents are vulnerable to addictions or depressions that shield them from the pain of this failed intimacy; they are constantly wounded by the uncaring atmosphere which greets them in school and other social institutions designed to "help" or "educate" them.

Our students' inability to trust adults is a mirror image of their distrust in themselves. Their rejection of "the system" and social norms, their sense of themselves as helpless, is the other side of the system's rejection of them as lazy, unmotivated, desocialized, hopeless students. This mutual rejection leads them further into isolation; into groups of other similarly wounded kids where they feel accepted and are left alone.

A high percentage of our applicants feel that "no one cared" about them in their high school; that they were "just a number"; that the authorities were glad to see them go. The Pink Floyd song, "We Don't Need No Education", eloquently expresses both sides of the equation: delivered in a menacing chant, the song portrays an educational system which treats the singer as "just another brick in the wall."[2] While the threatened violence of the singer's voice corroborates the system's perception of him as the archetypal "bad" student-; the lyrics of the song convey the singer's view of education as an archetypally malevolent system.

Just as the social outcomes of failed intimacy are withdrawal, alienation, mutual rejection and stereotyping, the intellectual ramifications are fear of learning and an inability to think.

In *How Children Fail*, John Holt describes how children must sustain a certain amount of intellectual insecurity to think about a problem:

> Schools give every encouragement to *producers*, the kids whose idea is to get "right answers" by any and all means. In a system that runs on "right answers," they can hardly help it. And these schools are often very discouraging places for *thinkers*.
>
> Until recently it had not occurred to me that poor students thought differently about their work than good students: I assumed they thought the same way, only less skillfully. Now it begins to look as if the expectation of *fear and failure* may lead children to act and think in a special way, to adopt strategies different from those of more confident children.
>
> Emily is a good example. She is emotionally as well as intellectually incapable of checking her work, of comparing her ideas against reality...She makes me think of an animal fleeing danger - go like the wind, don't look back, remember where the danger was and stay away from it as far as you can.[3]

For people who have been traumatized by unpredictable, uncaring, disrupted home and school environments, the ability or desire to sit with intellectual uncertainty becomes infinitesimal. Too much in their lives is already insecure; they retreat from thinking because it is too painful.

The questions then become how best can we structure an educational environment so that it becomes "safe" to think, to feel, to be? How does one differentiate the learning environment significantly enough from past situations that students feel they have a chance; that learning need not be painful, oppressive or boring?

Structuring Intimacy in Education: Structural and Programmatic Elements

Program Size: Size is the most obvious environmental condition necessary to produce the felt sense of intimacy. The school-community must be small enough to allow for formal and informal personal encounters between students and staff. One of the secrets of the Community School's longevity is that we've stayed small. The program works with a maximum of eight students a term; there are six faculty members, one of whom is present at all times. According to *High Schools As Communities: The Small School Reconsidered* by Gregory and Smith, schools of up to 250 students can also achieve a strong sense of interpersonal intimacy.[4]

Space: Students need to have a definite physical space which is *theirs*. It should be comfortable, inviting, and personal. When students enter the Community School they come in through the kitchen; they are interviewed in the living room. The furniture is worn but serviceable; the bookshelves, wall decorations and plants make the environment much more reminiscent of home than school.

Staff Structure: In most conventional schools little effort is spent on creating a sense of "collegiality" among faculty. Gary Whelage defines this term as "the key characteristic of a successful teacher culture.[5] He describes the importance of team work and participation in group activities, some of which are not work-focused. Developing a sense of collegiality will lead to a feeling of intimacy among faculty, and hopefully will allow staff to "model" productive, respectful relationships for the students.

Educators of high school students, especially troubled ones, must come to grips with their own interpersonal issues that are often mirrored by the students they have chosen to work with. If self-reflection, insight and openness are encouraged among staff, the roles of teacher and student as educators of each other take on a much more reciprocal nature. The possibility for meaningful educational encounters have been maximized.

To create and support a sense of intimacy among staff the School devotes 5 hours a week to a full faculty meeting. An outside consultant facilitates the meeting. Staff all "check in" on how they're feeling at the moment, and bring up compliments and resentments they wish to discuss with their colleagues. Program decisions are made as much as possible by consensus, and the faculty formally evaluates itself four times a year.

The connections between staff culture and student culture are subtle and powerful. When there is a significant turnover of staff one term, more students than usual are apt to drop out the next one. As in a family, the level of trust and intimacy experienced among the faculty has a direct impact on the development of trust between students and the school.

To be successful in the long run, programs need to structure ways for their staff to become close, to support and teach one another. Programs must pay as much attention to the needs of the faculty as they do to the needs of the students.

If schools do not build in mechanisms for taking care of the caregivers, faculty will burn out quickly, substantially reducing the program's effectiveness.

Attention: The Interview, The One-to-One, The Group

To teach successfully one must have the opportunity to pay attention to one's students. One must learn what *they* are experiencing, and how it feels to be who they are.

> " 'Ninety percent of learning,' to quote Garrison Keillor 'is paying attention.' But (to quote Bob) both teacher and student must be paying attention."[6]

In 1962 Paul Goodman pointed out in *Compulsory Mis-education* that:

> Adolescents (in America) are spiritually abandoned. They are insulated *by not being* taken seriously. ...Disregarded by the adults, they have in turn excluded adult guidance...[7]

Have we managed to change this pattern of disregard in the last 30 years?

The following descriptions illustrate the three primary modalities through which The Community School focuses attention on its students.

The Interview: An interview is a student's first contact with the School. The interviewer asks the applicant serious and challenging personal questions, listening carefully and supportively to the answers. The process can take from 1 1/2 to to 2 1/2 hours and includes time for the student or her parents to ask questions and air concerns about the program. The encounter as depicted below, is a cross between an interview and a counseling session:

Frank enters the room gingerly as if any false step would disturb something. His mother follows self-consciously, finding a place to sit as quickly as possible. They sit on opposite sides of the room.

When Frank explains how he heard about the school from a former student, his mother adds, "I'm just not sure what I'll do without him at home, but I'm so proud that he's trying to finish school." Her reddened eyes water over imperceptibly.

Frank deftly sidesteps the emotion-laden moment by asking the interviewer whether or not one can play the game Dungeons and Dragons at the School. His mother leaves the room to allow the actual interview to begin.

Bob, the staff interviewer, has a brusque style. He gruffly asks Frank the ninety questions which cover family, school, work, and legal history. Frank is impressed by Bob's casual appearance; he wears a T-shirt and jeans, and has a lengthy white beard. Bob seems attentive and interested in Frank's responses, particularly those relating to substance abuse issues. He is not sure if Bob is suspicious, or if he really cares.

Questions about his family are the hardest to answer. Despite his loyalty, there is not much to be proud of. When asked to name one good quality of his - Frank replies: "I wouldn't take up much space."

Often the important bond formed between applicant and interviewer can last the entire term. The faculty interviewer "presents" the interview to the full staff after discussion with another staff member. Conditions for acceptance are based on the full staff's recommendations. The interviewer works with an applicant until s/he is finally in the program, on a waiting list, or not accepted. This process may take as long as 6 hours of individual and group staff time.

Student acceptance is determined by staff consensus. The interview is the beginning of a student's integration into the school-community; it is a process based upon careful listening and attention. For the process to work, staff must listen and attend to *each other* as well as they do to the applicant.

The One-to-One: The advisory relationship known as the "one-to-one" is the most powerful method of focusing attention and care on a student at the Community School. Each student meets regularly with one teacher who acts as their advisor, coach, advocate and friend for the entire term. In many instances it is the strength of this relationship that sustains the student while s/he meets the demands of the program.

The character of a one-to-one meeting is dependent on the relationship that can be forged between staff and student. A typical meeting will include: reviewing the student's preceding week; problem solving to resolve conflicts; planning for the group meeting if the student has issues s/he wishes to, or will be required to, address; discussing future goals and current concerns.

One-to-ones may be held while teacher and student sit in a quiet room, walk around the block, drive to work, climb a tree. They may take an hour, or be accomplished in three ten-minute sessions.

Regardless of the form these meetings take, their two primary purposes are to establish a trusting relationship between student and teacher, and to facilitate the student's progress through the program.

Although students who take advantage of the one-to-one process tell us how important it is to them, some students can not use the one-to-one. Getting close to anyone is too painful and frightening. As one of our first students once said, "I'd rather have someone hit me over the head with a bat than care about men. In these cases the teacher becomes more of a manager, facilitating the student's practical success in the program. Whether fully utilized or not, the one-to-one offers all students the possibility of carrying on a sustained relationship with one supportive and trustworthy adult.

The Group: The conscious use of group process is a third modality for structuring intimacy in education. Because adolescents have a tremendous drive to belong to groups of peers which accept them, their initial impetus to join a community of peers is naturally strong.

For students who have never felt that they fit or belonged anywhere the prospect of joining a group, however - especially one which includes adults - raises ambivalent feelings.

For these students, groups must be accessible, accepting, and respectful.

The Community School offers an array of differently structured groups for all students to participate in: cooperative learning experiences in which all students and tutors take part precede evening tutorials; physical education requirements are met by weekend camping trips which are a combination of family outings and challenging physical experiences; every Thursday evening the entire school-community meets in the living room to vote on issues of school governance and discuss conflicts and interpersonal upheavals; seminars focus on special issues such as sexuality and self esteem, substance abuse, and non-violent conflict resolution, and finally, since the school is residential, many unplanned interactions take place in a group.

In a paper written for a community college class, Steve Hayden, a former student, expressed the impact that his Community School experience had on him:

> I am a very lucky person to have a need for group support. When I first found out I had a necessity for this type of thing, I thought my life had come to a miserable slump....Today I think back to the first group I attended. This was at an alternative high school. On Thursday nights we had group rap.
>
> This may well have been my first structured family. Now I have five or six families I can put a face on, and thousands I haven't yet.[9]

The group format teaches not only content skills but helps students learn how to be contributing members of a community. It establishes a sense of comfortable connectedness.

Drawbacks of Providing Intimate Learning Environments:

To stress intimacy in an educational approach raises major issues for staff and student alike. Overwhelming feelings may be conjured up by living and learning in homelike environments, by trusting again, by being trusted and enfranchised. The following descriptions detail a few key problems that can arise in utilizing an intimacy centered

Often the most "successful" student experiences the greatest pain in an educational setting like The Community School. She comes to the school as Tracy did and allows herself to trust a bit more and feel safe. This process unleashes several dragons: first, she begins to get in touch with some of her previously suppressed and denied experiences; second, she notices all that has been missing in her previous relationships, both emotional and intellectual; and third, she must deal with the undeniable fact that her term at the School is time-limited - she must leave at the end regardless of how well she has done.

In a recent meeting of graduates, Jory, now a 28-year-old truck driver who had no family support when he was at the School, likened his experience of graduating to a plane ride. "...when I came to the end, there was no one there to meet me. I felt lost again."[10] Several years after she graduated Tracy commented to me, "I worked so hard just to stay in the program; to complete something for the first time in my life. Then after all these struggles, I was successful and you (the school) said I had to go!"[11] Tracy's feelings of anger and loss are common among graduating students.

The School has begun to address this issue by creating a post-graduate program: Project Graduation and Beyond, which will support students once they leave by providing ongoing tutoring, referral, and group work.

In the context of post-graduate work, a focus on close relationships can be problematic because of the importance specific staff-student relationships attain. Students who had strong attachments to a specific staff member who is no longer teaching at the School have to come to grips with "change", and do not feel as trusting of unknown new staff. Dora, the School's

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There are enormous consequences if students and staff are unable to address the myriad personality and behavioral issues which arise in a residential group. It is not infrequent that a student will threaten to drop out of the program if "something isn't done" about a fellow student. The feeling is expressed as "either they go or I do."

If in a larger, more impersonal setting the force of one personality is diminished; in an intimate setting it is potentiated. How to put up with people one does not like is one of the most difficult lessons to learn at The Community School.

A problem arises as well for faculty. Interpersonal relations among staff form the hub of the school's relational community. These relationships can become convoluted and complicated as the work stirs up innumerable personal issues. Hours of self-reflective work are needed to restore a sense of clarity and common purpose. But this time is usually not available because of the pressing programmatic issues that take priority.

The faculty must walk a tightrope, balancing the need to take care of its students with the need to attend to itself. Furthermore the staff must find a way to both support and supervise itself, so that feedback can be clearly distinguished as interpersonal or task-related.

Positive Effects of an Intimacy-Based Methodology:

The personal encounter: One of the most powerful consequences of generating a sense of closeness within at learning community is that staff and student can experience genuine personal encounters with each other. Such encounters are the unplanned, but vital curriculum of programs like the Community School. They involve two or more people within the community discussing or doing something which is of import to each without anyone feeling that their participation is compulsory.

In *De-Schooling Society*, Ivan Illich points out that:

> ...reliance on institutional process has replaced dependence on personal good will. The world has lost its humane dimension...The relational structures we need are those which will enable each person to define themselves by learning and contributing to the learning of others.[12]

Moments of unplanned learning form an aspect of the core curriculum at The Community School. In fact, Einstein's favorite definition of education was: "what we remember after we forget everything we learned in school." [13] For people such as our students who have defended themselves rigidly against formal education these unselfconscious learning encounters can be a re-entry into the realm of thinking and learning.

In ten days Sam will to graduate from The Community School. He and I go out for a coffee to talk about his plans for the future and to have a final meeting before he leaves. He is proud of the fact that he's been accepted at a technical school; he had never considered going beyond high school.

The subject of his father's death comes up. It happened almost a year ago. Sam says he would have gone crazy if it hadn't been for his girlfriend being there with him. He thinks she may be away at college when the anniversary of the death comes this year. He hopes he can "handle it" alone.

I ask him if he's thought about coming back to the school for a day or two near the anniversary; perhaps he could spend some time with his one-to-one. Sam is pleased at the suggestion. He'll talk about it with Buck, his one-to-one, when he gets back to school.

This momentary discussion has taught us both several things: that emotions can be tied to events which are tied to specific times of year; that one needn't tough it out alone even if one is an American Male; that a sense of community can extend over a geographic distance; that taking care of ourselves properly involves feeling, thinking and communicating.

Academic Contagion: A learning environment which promotes closeness also increases the chances that one person's enthusiasm will rub off on someone else. One of the primary results of an intimacy-centered learning environment is that students have direct contact with adults - faculty, volunteers, community members - who have found joy and mastery in a specific field of knowledge.

The hoped for effect is that the adult's joyful and knowledgeable interest will stimulate a resonance of similar interest in the student, or perhaps tap into a reserve of interest as yet unknown to the student.

Reg is a Passamaquoddy Indian from Zebayig - a reservation in Perry, Maine. Along with having a variety of behavioral issues, he has never managed to sustain an interest in school. His big frame and muscular body , his constant angry awareness that he is from an oppressed culture, make him an intimidating person to work with, at first.

In the course of his stay at the Community School Reg loosens up a bit. He has a reservoir of humor. Bob, a staff member who is an avid poetry enthusiast, and is committed to working with Native Americans, introduces him to Native American poetry as part of his literature curriculum. Reg likes what he reads. The rest of the staff joins in suggesting their favorite poems to Reg. He reads them. He begins to write his own.

He continues to write poems through his most difficult moments at the School. I call him three months after he has completed his term - he still has several requirements to finish before he graduates. Is he still writing poetry? I ask. Every day, he answers. I ask him to send me some; I'd like to read them and perhaps put them in the School's newsletter. No, he says, I can read them when I come to visit.

Removal of Blocks: An educational environment which creates a sense of safety and care allows students to begin to trust others. They let down emotional and mental guards which so effectively protected them from their past educational abuse and neglect. Their "learning disabilities", diagnosed or not, have functioned as an armor to keep their own and other's expectations of themselves at as low a level as possible. Their conception of themselves as "stupid" blocks learning and results in "brittle" minds that are scared to risk thinking.

Joe arrives at the School from Houlton. He is 19 and designated a "slow learner". He has failed ninth grade three times and is firmly convinced that he is basically dumb. A few weeks into the term he chooses math as his first subject to cope with. Sitting down with his tutors to work, he struggles for the "right" answers and fails. He is embarrassed by his inability to grasp the material.

In the middle of a particularly difficult lesson he asks Dora, the Co-Director, to talk with him. They go into the office, shut the door, and Joe proceeds to explain that he just can't do it, he'll have to leave. He likes the School, but he just can't do the work. He never liked Math.

At this point Joe is shaking. Tears roll down his cheeks. He is 19 years old, a man capable of a good hard day's work in the potato houses, and the prospect of continuing on in the pain and confusion which math inspires in him seems unbearable.

Dora listens to him carefully. She tells him that it's normal for him to feel the way he does after having tried so hard for so long and failed. She adds that the School will work with him as long as he needs to on academics, there is no rush. A year later Joe gets his diploma, it has taken an extra six months, but, in the process he has re-learned to trust his own thinking abilities.

Perseverance: Students who begin to experience a connection to others in their learning environment become more persistent learners. They become less afraid of failure and more willing to take intellectual risks, to sit with unanswered questions, to work towards long-term goals. In a beautiful passage John Holt describes how we all are persistent learners at the beginning of our lives:

> A baby does not react to failure as an adult does or even a five year old because she has not yet been made to feel that failure is shame, disgrace, a crime. Unlike her elders she is not concerned with protecting herself against everything that is not easy and familiar; she reaches out to experience, she embraces life.[14]

Holt ascribes less importance than I would to the fact that the baby is carrying out her "experiments" within the context of a loving, attentive family which protects her from the "natural" disasters which could befall her in the course of her explorations. When students feel that their acceptance as people is not contingent upon a particular academic success, they can relax; the energy they have used to defend themselves can be used to learn; they learn to persist despite their mistakes and setbacks.

In the light of the many little successes students experience regularly at the School, failure takes on a different complexion. It is not an annihilating experience. Students are honored more for their efforts than their ability to take tests. Students understand that the School will work with them as long as they need in order to graduate. Ultimately learning becomes a cooperative rather than a combative experience more like the explorations of Holt's baby than the standardized mechanical experiences which make up the worst of conventional education.

Long Term Results in One Setting: What have been the educational and social outcomes for students at The Community School over the past 17 years? Approximately 70% graduate with a high school diploma from The Community School, another 5% to 7% will complete their education via the service, G.E.D., or adult education. Roughly 20% have gone on to some other form of education.

Perhaps the most unexpected result is that over 60% of our former students have remained in contact with the School. During the past year the program received more than 450 contacts from former students ranging from letters to phone call to visits. It often feels like our work has only commenced at matriculation.

It is my belief that any program which places the same high value on interpersonal and intellectual closeness could achieve similar or better short and long-term results. Larger programs could make effective use of older students, parents, and volunteers to bring down the staff:student ratio. Wherever faculties make long term commitments to these educational goals, students will take the risk of connecting and learning.

Conclusion: I have tried to make a case for what most of us in the world of education should find obvious: the opportunity for students and teachers to be close with one another intellectually and emotionally is a crucial aspect of any truly effective educational process. Why does this need to be re-iterated? Because we get so wrapped up in our drive to find and use educational technologies which "work" and labels which help us sort out and define different student populations we forget that one of the fundamental pre-conditions for learning to take place is the experience of intimacy.

Neither computers, nor interactive videos, nor programmed textbooks can save us from this fact: if we don't provide the space and time for our children to meet, and think and learn together with their teachers as complete human beings, they will never connect to form the educational communities necessary for learning to occur.

The system will continue to spew out disaffected, alienated, and disenfranchised people, people who have given up, people who are afraid to think and terrified to learn.

Notes:

1. John Holt, *How Children Fail*, (New York: Dell, 1964), p. 12.

2. Roger Waters, "The Wall", (New York: Pink Floyd Music Publishers, 1979), "Another Brick in the Wall".

3. Holt, *How Children Fail*, p.48.

4. Thomas B. Gregory, Gerald R. Smith, *High Schools as Communities: The Small School Reconsidered*, (Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1987), p.59, 60, 74.

5. Gary Wehlage, "Effective Programs for the Marginal High School Student." Fastback #297. (Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1983), p.45.

6. Bob Dickens, Community School Newsletter #52, (Camden, Me: Community School Press, 1989), p. 1.

7. Paul Goodman, *Compulsory Mis-education*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), p. 74.

8. Community School Student to Emanuel in 1974 during a one-to-one session.

9. Steve Hayden, Community School Graduate, Community School Newsletter #52, (Camden, ME: Community School Press, 1989), P. 2.

10. Community School Student at former student group, 1990.

11. Community School Student to Emanuel two years after graduation, 1987.

12. Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 111.

13. Albert Einstein, *Out of My Later Years*, (New York, Philosophical Library, 1950), p. 71.

14. John Holt, *How Children Fail*, p. 89.

POETRY:

TWO BY CHRIS:

NINETEEN MEN

Nineteen men sat at the long table
like knights with armor shed,
their scars exposed to the early winter drafts.
While rusty eagle hovered overhead,
each stood in exquisite turn,
and uttered his oath to the Beloved.

Nineteen faces of a single diamond,
each shadowed with his own imperfection,
each revealing his own inner light,
each sparkling in the sun's slanting rays.

One by one we spoke of a longing
deep and sometimes bitter,
while tears of atonement
salted our royal feast,
eaten in awed, sacred silence.

Nineteen men sat at the long table,
like knights with armor shed,
and what precious little left unsaid!

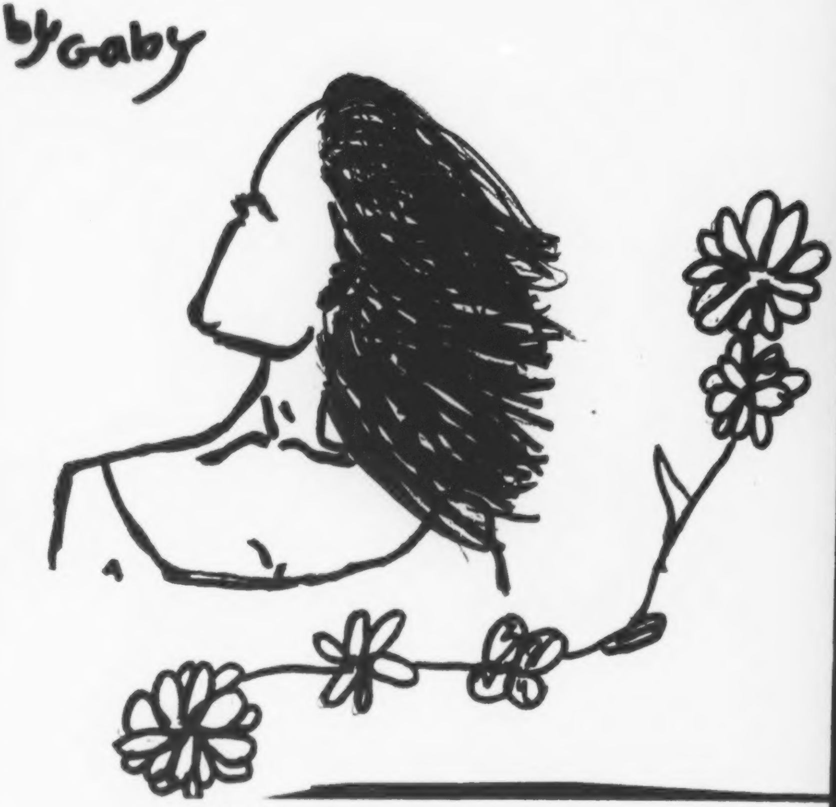
COMING HOME
by Chris Mercogliano

The sight of men's tears fills me with joy
and a sense of deep wonder.
The well is filled with such sweet water!
Who would ever wish it empty as I once did?

While a generation of men cries
to heal an untreated war,
Hard rain falls on the mountain
to rinse away the salt and seed the earth
with new possibilities.
Later, the calling of two owls
invokes the dreams of spiritual warriors,

And I awaken to the music of men's laughter
in the morning kitchen.
Clothed only in earth
we emerge from the sacred lodge
a circle of brothers sharing one brokenness,
one wholeness .

Then, guided by a rare moon vision:
a brilliant edge of light
streaming forth
from a darkened yet visible whole,
I return home more myself.



Drawing for School Newspaper
by Gaby Becker

HOMER LANE AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

by John Potter

Homer Lane's work with delinquent children in the early part of this century is little known in England and perhaps even less known in his own country, America. If Lane's name is all but forgotten he has nevertheless left a legacy of valuable work and ideas in the area of delinquency and has in addition had some influence in the adoption of forms of self-government in some of the progressive schools, particularly in England, following his own experiment in self-government at the Little Commonwealth in Dorset.

Lane's experiment with self-government did not begin, however, at the Little Commonwealth but in his work at what became the Ford Republic in Detroit some six years before he came to England. The Ford Republic (named after the family who donated much of the money to rebuilding the school following a fire) was primarily a reformatory for delinquents which Lane took over as Superintendent after its move into the country. He changed the system in which the school was run from a 'benevolent despotism' into a largely self-governing community with a citizens' court and a supreme court over which he, as Superintendent, presided.

The idea of Junior Republics was one that had been associated with W.R. George. His Republics spread, not only across the United States, but to influence schools, clubs and prisons in other countries. Lane, however, claimed to have been unaware of George's work when he reached his own conclusions on self-government at the Ford Republic and said that he had, in fact, been more influenced by his own early experiences with the Sloyd method. This was a theory that working for some practical end would help to gain the interest of the student.

Certainly, Lane's ideas on self-government were in advance of those of W.R. George, who had accommodated a system of punishment into his own Republic - at first thrashing and disciplining the boys himself, then handing over these matters to the community as a whole. Lane also punished at first at the Ford Republic but came to a realization that punishment was useless. Where George had used self-government as the solo method - and in a very crude form - Lane began to understand that he had another weapon which was unique to his own school. This was the 'power of affection.' It was not until after he had left the Ford Republic, just before he came to England in 1913, that this idea took proper root in his thinking. According to Lane's biographer, David Wills:

> He discovered that, although he had been using a conscious technique that was novel and which few others had used, his work was unique because it was permeated by a spirit which was wholly his. He had vaguely realized... that the George Junior Republic, superficially so similar to his own, lacked something which his had. He began to see that, whereas other workers in this field conducted themselves as if they were in a different camp, a different category from those they sought to 'save', he himself belonged to the same camp, was one of them. How far recent events contributed to this revelation we cannot guess; but

certainly now he began to realize that he was, as he was to put it later, 'on their side'.[1]

Anti-social behaviour was simply a case of 'positive virtue wrongly expressed', to demand obedience was futile. and juvenile crime he saw as a kind of play. In *Talks to Parents and Teachers* - the only collection of Homer Lane's ideas, as reproduced from lecture notes - he says:

> If schools would forget the ritualizing of games and books, and would allow children absolute freedom to sort themselves out and to develop their own activities, we should have a very different type of adult, more love of country and less patriotism.[2]

The fruition of these ideas came about at the Little Commonwealth which Lane was invited to start in England in the Autumn of 1913 and which was closed in 1918. The Little Commonwealth was a self-governing community of children and adolescents up to the age of eighteen. The vast majority were difficult and delinquent, many being sent direct to the Little Commonwealth from the law courts. The community contained both boys and girls, unlike the Ford Republic which had born for boys only. The self-government was introduced very gradually. Lane's idea was for the community to come to their own realization of the need for rules end order following what must have been a lengthy and grueling period of chaos and aggression. Out of all the noise and turmoil there did evolve a system of self-government, which by 1916 was complete.

Lane claims to have stood aside and watched these developments without interference, in fact encouraging members of the community in both good and bad actions.

An important feature of the self-governing community was that a system of payment for work was introduced. Members of the community helped in building and other outside work as well as attending lessons and each member of the community was paid a wage in Commonwealth currency for their work in the various departments. With this wage the community member had to support himself or herself and pay for food, clothing and recreation. A small tax was also paid and from the collection of taxes the idle or destitute members were supported.

Lord Lytton, one of the Executive Committee of the Little Commonwealth, has outlined what he saw as the three main principles of Lane's work there, which could be of universal application:

1. The 'law of love'; Lane was on the side of the child, and 'badness' was simply misdirected goodness.

2. 'Absolute freedom' is never really absolute. We can never escape the consequences of our actions. The economic lessons of this could be discovered at the Little Commonwealth; also the liberty to discover that the community disintegrates if it doesn't discover how to maintain itself.

3. Self-government. The community at the Little Commonwealth made their own rules and enforced their own discipline.

Lane, in *Talks to Parents and Teachers*, says that it is a common mistake to think that man is composed of good and bad in fairly equal parts - that the good cen be encouraged by favour and rewards, the bad stopped through punishment. It cannot. All of his experience at the Little Commonwealth convinced him that these assumptions were wrong. On the contrary, he found that:

> ...almost all delinquent children will resolve their difficulties in an atmosphere of freedom and encouragement.[3]

and,

> The authority that is based upon force will transform love into hatred and hope into fear.[4]

While these ideas of Homer Lane's on the treatment of delinquency may be even now seen as radical, the idea of self-government - at least of a very early and primitive kind - was in existence as early as the mid-eighteenth century. William Gilpin in England introduced into his school an early system of jury and appeal, a forerunner of the idea of self-government. David Manson, in Belfast, had a form of self-government in his school based on the complex gradation of rank. It seems, however, that they were motivated by quite different reasons from later concepts of self-government. Their motives were mainly to attempt to give teachers an easier time by manipulating the pupils in more effective ways. Later pioneers such as David Williams introduced forms of self-government, while Robert Owen introduced a Rousseau-influenced system involving no rewards or punishments. In the Co-operative schools of England the top classes had a vote in the running of the school, and the Hills and Hazlewood School, in the early nineteenth century is reported to have had 'complete self-government for the boys.'

However, it seems that there was no one until Homer Lane who was prepared to introduce such radical forms of self-government based so much on faith in children and in their finding their own ways to work things out. W.A.C. Stewart, in his book, *Radicals and Progressives in English Education*, compares Lane with another, more famous pioneer, Maria Montessori. He notes that Lane's teaching prescribed very little: money had to be earned, the school community had power. Montessori, on the other hand, had many more subtle ways of moulding children's learning, and an adult control of disruptive factors. Stewart says that the key question is this: "To what extent do children know what is best for them?" This sorts out the Montessorians from the Laneites.

The Laneites were and are, of course, very small in number. The direct influence of Lane was felt in particular by a small band of educationists who were his contemporaries or near-contemporaries. Norman MacMunn, who wrote *The Child's Path of Freedom* (1928), was one who acknowledged Lane's influence. Later, David Wills was another who attempted to follow Lane's path.

Two of the men who were most affected by Lane and who went on to follow his self-governing principles in their own independent schools for 'normal' children were J.H. Simpson at Rendcomb and A.S. Neill at Summerhill. J.H. Simpson's experiments with self-government were carried out chiefly after he was appointed headmaster of Rendcomb in Gloucestershire, which started on his appointment in 1919. Simpson's background was as a teacher in Public Schools and he had also spent some time as a junior inspector of the Board of Education. During that time he had had some contact with the Little Commonwealth and had been impressed. He called Rendcomb a 'self-governing' school and tried to base it loosely on the Little Commonwealth. Stewart states that:

> There was a General Meeting to which boys ages thirteen and older belonged. Offices were held for a term and holders were elected by the boys, as were appointments to the many sub-committees, the Games Committee, the Finance Committee, the House Committee, and so on. There were games wardens, three shopkeepers, a banker, an auditor, end a council of seven boys who were elected for the duration of their school life and who acted as a boys' judiciary.[5]

To this rather complicated organization, was added a fairly complex system of money and grants to be spent by the various officers. As at the Little Commonwealth, a considerable economic responsibility was vested in the community and its individual members. At Rendcomb, after some experiments, it was decided that the staff could not attend the General Meeting as members, and Simpson himself sat in as a 'non-voting member.'

J.H. Simpson left Rendcomb in 1932, the self-governing features remaining. He writes of his experiments and his influence by Lane, primarily in 'Schoolmaster's Harvest' (1954). By that time though, he believed only in the 'limited value' of self-government, felt that he had not given enough thought to ethical and religious education, and was critical of Lane for handing over all responsibility to the children, something, he felt, that had given them too much trouble.

If we are to find a close contemporary of Lane who followed through Lane's faith in children without wavering, we must turn to A.S. Neill. Neill has continually written of his debt to three men: Freud, Wilhelm Reich and Homer Lane. But it is clearly Homer Lane who, on Neill's own admission, has been the greatest influence and whose ideas of self-government for children and belief in their nature permeate Summerhill to this day. The Summerhill system of self-government has been well-documented in the writings of Neill and others, and it has survived relatively unchanged for over seventy years, outliving its founder. Compared to Rendcomb and other experiments in self-government, the system at Summerhill, based on Ombudsmen, Tribunal and General Meeting, is fairly simple and straightforward and can be easily understood by the children, whose ages have variously ranged from five to seventeen. Neill, of course, having met Lane at the Little Commonwealth during the First World War had been so impressed with his ideas that he had planned to join Lane in his work there after the war. However, by that time the Little Commonwealth had been closed.

There are many features of Lane's method of dealing with difficult children that are also evident in Neill's style. What Lane calls 'contra-suggestion' or doing the opposite of what is asked is very reminiscent of Neill's habit of dealing intuitively with problems at Summerhill. Lane felt that the abolishment of prohibitions is the most sensible way to curb behaviour which is anti-social:

> We believe that children develop bad habits by indulging in them; in reality, children develop bad habits if prevented from indulging in them.[6]

This remark, from *Talks to Parents and Teachers*, was made concerning the topic of weaning but the same principle applies throughout both Lane and Neill's philosophy.

However, Neill did not simply copy Lane uncritically. Although only seven years Lane's junior, Neill appears to have broken free of many habits which trapped Lane in a 'New England puritanism.' While Lane, for all his radicalism, was recommending the use of religion to explain ideas of birth to children, Neill was advocating telling the complete truth at all times.

Summerhill did not, and does not today, have any kind of economic system as the Little Commonwealth had - a small fine of money at the General Meeting being the only thing remotely resembling a financial aspect. Similarly, cleaning and outside work is generally taken care of by other staff and the children have no say in the hiring of teachers and other related matters. Rather than being a weakness, as some critics of Summerhill have implied, Albert Lamb, in his introduction to *The New Summerhill*, sees this as a reason for the community's strength:

> Our (Summerhill) children are given great responsibility over their lives but are still provided for in such a way that they can follow their childhood unhampered by social concerns that are beyond them.[7]

An important aspect of Lane's innovation - not just at Summerhill but at many progressive boarding schools - is the 'affective' relationship encouraged by Lane, or the growth of a kind of family feeling. Members of communities such as that at Summerhill are just as likely to attack each other verbally as they are to utter sweet and soothing words, as indeed can members of any close-knit family unit; without endangering their relationships with each other or to the family. David Wills has put it like this:

> Although to the stranger some of its manifestations may seem unpleasant, its background is mutual affection and mutual respect, and humility on the part of the adults. Because the adult does not think of himself as essentially a superior being, he does not say 'I forbid you to do such and such a thing'; he says rather, 'Don't be such a silly ass' (or even, indeed, 'a bloody fool'); 'if you do that it will have such and such consequence and you will wish you'd never done it'. The effect of this approach is to induce neither unwilling obedience nor rebelliousness but rather, an acceptance of the facts and an acting upon them.[8]

The General Meetings at both the Little Commonwealth and at Summerhill seem to have had a history of being conducted in a very orderly fashion. Fears that children governing themselves might punish wrongdoers too severely have not been borne out. What punishments there have been have proved to be remarkably lenient, and the patience and eventual wise authority of the meetings has become well-known. Despite fears also that Lane's methods could only be applied by him because of his own charisma, others such as Simpson and Neill have found that given the right conditions self-government can work very successfully. Indeed, similar fears about Summerhill being a 'one man show' and about the future of self-government were expressed following Neill's death, but almost twenty years later the system is flourishing. The Little Commonwealth - and Summerhill - as boarding communities of more than one hundred members are in the most favourable position for the introduction of meaningful self-government. It might be more difficult for day schools to adopt such a full and thorough system. In addition, where there are large numbers, or groups of very young children, say, of children exclusively under the age of twelve, it might be difficult to generate the same degree of social responsibility. However, there seems no reason why modifications of Lane's system should not be introduced if thought desirable. Various forms of self-government are now in existence, not just in progressive or radical independent schools, but in the form of 'school councils' in some government-run schools.

Despite Lane's troubled life, the scandals and the eventual closure of the Little Commonwealth, it cannot be seriously denied that his methods achieved considerable success and have interested and influenced a number of people, especially in education. That his methods have been adopted and developed by so few seems less because of doubts about their viability than with the inclination of societies that still prefer to repeat the mistakes of the past. The former psycho-analyst, Alice Miller, writing in *Banished Knowledge*, says that children who have been loved and respected, given responsibility and freedom, will store this knowledge within and cannot help but protect the weak and raise their children in the same loving and respecting way. Unfortunately, most of the people in charge of children's' lives today had very different kinds of experiences in their childhood:

> ...and they still believe those were correct. They can seldom empathize with children or summon any feeling for their own childhood fate.[9]

Neill, who regarded Lane as the most influential factor in his life, asked:

> Why does humanity choose a Hitler end not a Homer Lane? Why does it choose war and not peace, inhumanity towards criminals rather than psychological and social treatment? Perhaps because it is afraid of love, of tenderness.[10]

In the limited life of the Little Commonwealth, Homer Lane was able to demonstrate at the very least that self-government was a possibility for even some of the most hardened delinquents. If such successes could be achieved over seventy years ago a great chance is being missed if his ideas on self-government are not championed by many more of us.

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See John Potter's letter to Jerry Mintz from Japan, where he is a college teacher. We are grateful for this article. Now perhaps "our" John Potter will be inspired by raving jealousy to send me the article he once promised me if I would "bug him, bug him." Bug, bug, bug, John!!

CHILD REARING AND LEARNING FOR 'THE REAL WORLD'

by Joel Weber

Once each year, Joel Weber, Director of Contra Costa Alternative High School in Orinda, CA, delivers a sermon at the church where his school is located. The following is this year's sermon, spoken at Orinda Community Church, October 14, 1992.

The inspiration for this sermon came last June in an end-of-year family conference at the school. Every family has a closing conference like this, and some themes come through loud and clear over and over.

The father was expressing deep concern over his son's lack of achievement in math and his weak performance in homework throughout his schedule. Dad felt that doing homework was an opportunity to learn self-discipline, and that this sort of self-discipline was necessary if you were to survive and thrive in "the real world." Another thing he was thinking but didn't say, though many others have said it before him, is this: "You've got to start learning how to do things that you don't want to do," again for success in the real world.

These issues really get me going and could be a grand starting point for a global critique of western civilization. Fortunately for all of us, I will not attempt this critique right here right now. But I would focus this morning on one small and three enormous questions, which are these:

1. How important is homework for school or for life?

2. What is self-discipline? How does self-discipline relate to learning to do things you don't want to do?

The NEWS Room STAFF

(their own snapshot, taken from the school newspaper)
Alyssa, Marta, Jeremiah, Rebeccah, Gabrielle,
Elisha, Monique, Lily, Tony And Teddy

3. What is "the real world?" Isn't CCAS a part of it?

4. Overarching all of these other questions, what do we want most for our children? How do these goals fit with what goes on in schools and in families?

The first one is easy for me as an individual and as an educator. Homework is not that important as it's presently understood. Most homework is still rote and as such is pretty useless. Homework that conceptually connects home with school or involves parents—things like field trip follow-up or inventing an artistic representation for the number 100 for little kids, or even analyses of newspaper articles and TV shows for big kids - make a lot more sense.

But how many of you as adults do homework in the evenings and on weekends? I don't. This is part of what keeps me sane and energetic both for my family and for my work. I suspect that most adults do the bulk of their work during the day, or if they don't, their school homework wasn't what trained them to work nights and weekends. Let me take this even further. In the circles of adults that I know, some folks have homework for work—especially teachers—and I think this homework is a health hazard, bad for them, and bad for their families. It keeps them from, in the words of Henry David Thoreau, "approaching work with leisure," and also from approaching their families with leisure.

Now I don't want to prescribe this "no homework" philosophy as an unbendable universal truth, but if I were in charge, I can tell you there wouldn't be very much homework for anybody except college people with class schedules of less than 40 hours.

How does this relate to self-discipline? What is self-discipline? How will kids learn it if they don't do homework? What does self-discipline have to do with learning to do things you don't want to do? Small children have enormous self-discipline. Just watch them play. Watch them learn to speak. Watch them learn to walk. Educator John Holt was fond of pointing out that these tasks that children learn, with their families' help, are far more complex and demanding than anything most of us learn later. And we learn them without school! The job of the schools then is to keep the self-discipline and enthusiasm flowing rather than constricting or stopping them. It enrages me that year after year, when kids fall behind in reading in the first grade, they get labeled and mistaught. Their fire, their self-discipline, gets quenched, and they sometimes spend years being behind and getting more behind. This to me points to one real context of self-discipline—it's there; we've got it; schools and adults must not take it from us; rather they must nurture it.

Well, there's my unorthodox definition of self-discipline, and I'm saying you don't learn it; it's natural but schools and adults can help you to unlearn it. But what does this have to do with learning to do the things you don't want to do? Surely as we grow up our interests narrow. Or what if there's nothing or very little that you're interested in or that you want to do?

Quite often there are things you don't want to do embedded in the things you do want to do. Paul may want to be a great guitarist and make fine music, yet he may not want to do all the practice necessary to get there. If he's to become a great guitarist, though, he breaks the job down and starts practicing what he can. Somewhere along the line, there's a shift. He discovers that he loves the practice. He gets oriented to process rather than just to outcome. He ends up becoming a great guitarist even though he didn't love the practice at the beginning. Or maybe he doesn't become a great guitarist, but he plays well and loves to play. Isn't that okay? Isn't that, in fact, great, and one of the kinds of things that makes life worth living?

This to me gets almost Zen, this loving of the process, as long as there's time for the process; as long as the process isn't rushed. For myself I really love cooking and even like cleaning the kitchen as long as there's enough time to do it. Conversely, no matter how neat the next thing I have to do, if it's crushed together with a million other things in such a way that I don't really have time to do any of them with leisure or to breathe while I'm doing them, then I don't really enjoy any of them. They become chores.

My son Jonah recently quit piano after about six months. I'm very proud of him for the way he made this decision. He can't do it the good way he wants to while he's being a junior high student and playing soccer on a traveling team. He's one of the only kids I know who has a sense of when he's overloaded, so backs off something. On the other hand, I really hope he picks it up again. I get tremendous pleasure from playing accordion and guitar, and I hope he gets back to piano because I think skill and time there will bring him lifelong pleasure. Once again homework rears its ugly head here. If I were in charge, I would decrease his homework load by whatever it took to create mental space and time for piano. I believe that in the long term, piano will contribute much more to his health and happiness than having done more rather than less homework.

I have dealt so far with how you learn to do things you don't want to do. What if there's nothing, or almost nothing, that you want to do? A CCAS father once told a story of his kid learning to tie his shoes. Dad worked hard with him on this, finishing with, "And now you can tie your own shoes!" expecting Gavin to be delighted. Gavin thought for a minute and said, "You mean from now on I'll always have to tie them myself?" A surprising reaction to me, and to his dad. I would expect that most kids would be overjoyed with the independence and the new skill. Once again this points up the tremendous variety in human beings and human response.

But what if somebody really doesn't want to do stuff, or very much stuff? Look to the schools and look to the family. The child has been wounded and probably doesn't have the self-respect to feel like the kind of person who can do things or who even wants to do things. The damage must be healed or repaired. This is actually a good part of the day-to-day work we do at CCAS—in the classrooms, in conversation, in meetings, in tutoring, in counseling. If a person doesn't have a positive self-image, then someone or something or things took it from them. Others must help them get it back.

But here comes another persistent CCAS parent argument—"It's all well and good," they say, "to work on self-image and music and art and this touchy-feely stuff, but when Gwendolyn gets out in the real world, she's going to need some basic skills, she's going to need to fit in, and she's going to need, at work, to do lots of things she flat out doesn't want to do and never will want to do. What about that?

Let's dispose of the basic skills issue first. With wounded kids, they need to heal before they learn all those basic skills, or they need to learn them in a therapeutic healing setting. If they're not wounded, or if they are recovering from their wounds, they'll learn these basic skills just fine when they're ready, in preschool, or elementary, or high school, or in college, or when they're needed.

What are these basic skills anyway? People will automatically think of reading and writing, but in my experience, speaking and especially listening are far more important in most of our adult lives than reading and writing. Think about this in your own day-to-day work and life and see if it doesn't fit. It's certainly true for top executives and many business people.

What about this business of needing to fit in? I submit that it is a sort of hazing like fraternity or sorority hazing. The whole text to me is, "I, your parent, had to submit and fit in, so you have to also." But the real world is not monolithic; the real world of work is not monolithic; just as kids are different, adults are different, and jobs are different. What am I saying about the real world here? I am saying that late twentieth century America is unbelievably varied. There are many places to fit in; there are many ways to fit in. People have choices. And now I really want to shock you, and me, and all CCAS parents. CCAS is part of the real world. It has corporeal existence. It has been around for nearly twenty-five years. I'm a real person in the real world and I actually work at CCAS. So do Jeanie and Daniel and Renée. We even get paid. Our students are real people in the real world. So please, parents, give more thought to what you mean by the real world.

Finally, to that overarching question, what do we as parents and a society want most for our children? How do these goals fit with our parenting and our school system?

I cannot speak for you, but I'm pretty sure of what I want for my own kids. I want them to grow up to be happy, to know how to pursue happiness. I want them to know how to be in relationships. I want them, as my friend Jeanie puts it, to know how to use their community as a resource, as a network. I want them to know what their gifts are—we all have gifts—and to cultivate them. I want them to be aware of the world beyond them, politically and ecologically.

As they and I pursue these goals, I believe that their self-discipline will remain intact with their enthusiasm, and that they will do just fine in whatever niches of the so-called real world they find or put themselves. And what I want for my kids is exactly what I want for all the CCAS kids, past and present. I do not pretend that all kids are like mine, or that all school kids are like the ones at CCAS, but in terms of the school system at large, it could certainly use an enormous shot of this outlook of diversity and support. Kids are not clones and they're not robots. We must respect them in their individuality. They need homes, parents, and schools that recognize their variety and that speak to and bring out their passions, concerns, hopes, and dreams.

Joel Weber has headed up Contra Costa Alternative School for more than two decades now! Lucky the kids who get to live with a person, a teacher, with so wise a perspective! After waiting in hope for at least four years for a promised profile of CCAS, I managed to capture this gem from the Coalition Newsletter! *Not a full profile, but so valuable! Some day, I still dare to hope, I may yet receive another article of my own from Joel! Perhaps you can tell, timewise, from this one why I've not yet received it yet.*

SOME THOUGHTS ON A TEACHER FORMATION PROGRAM

To: Teacher Formation Program
The Fetzer Institute
Kalamazoo, Michigan

From: John Taylor Gatto

Dear Fetzers:

Teachers teach who they are. That's a perspective I've held on teaching for nearly three decades and all the effort I ever spent becoming a better teacher was spent directly on becoming a better me. Anyone willing to reflect on the matter carefully will see that there hardly can exist a service called "teacher training", the idea is based on a military fantasy of Helmuth von Moltke that the method to train a mass army was a rigid plan set down by staff experts which the field command would execute.

Teacher training was a Prussian invention,too; it was supposed to make the educational plan teacher-proof–and it did! The net result is the school world around us. Except for stuff too petty to matter much, no form of collegiate teacher training can help men and women be wise, mature, competent and humane adults. And parents should go to the barricades before they let the State put their children with any other kind.

So I was glad to see you call your program teacher *formation*, because that *may* be a possibility. If you can help human beings become complete you'll get better teachers as a natural by-product of that. A better deal for kids starts with a better deal for teachers, there just isn't any other way.

But don't jump to the conclusion I mean more money because I don't mean that at all, in fact if you redefine teaching to include all those grown-ups, no matter who they are, who have 1) made something of themselves 2) want to work with kids, part-time or full-time 3) Are willing to forswear force in attracting an audience, and you work to get rid of the phony certification requirements that presently drive the majority of good candidates away from the teaching business, I think you'll find the net bill to society is much *less*. I'm sympathetic to the argument that teachers should be compensated fairly, it's just that government is the last agency who might know how much that would take. As it is, one out of every two people being paid in schools now--many of them as "teachers"--don't see any kids from the start of a week to its finish.

Teachers teach who they are, they can hardly teach much of anything else if you think about it.* If you take that seriously, and I do, it suggests that much of the expensive attention given to prepared curricula, official materials, suitable spaces, testing, various specialized licenses, etc. is misguided.

A better deal for teachers would consist of building social architecture around them with enough room in it to allow them to become whole people. If we were very candid with istic most prominent among the millions of people teaching school these days is that they are childlike and incomplete. By teaching who they are they inadvertently do a great deal of harm. I don't mean to say there aren't hundreds of thousands of exceptions to that, or that teachers aren't as smart as any other labor category in our economy. In the beginning they're probably a cut or two above most other groups. But the constant confinement with children, the sterility of the workplace, the dependence on routines, sequences, extremely low grade text material, bells and surveillance, the lack of privacy, the relentless isolation from policy-making and colleagues, the implied inferiority, catches up to them quickly. If they didn't enter the business childlike and incomplete--and the nature of going into a job like teaching right out of college almost ensures that they will be--the culture of schools will make them that way or terminate them.

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* The children I had the most profound effect on as a teacher were invariably those who were incomplete in the same way that I had been or perhaps still was. The implications of this are deep.

I know there are schools you think are exceptions to that indictment, but in the government sector I'll have to disagree with you; there *are* schools where teachers are given a chance to grow up because of a personal decision (and some risk-taking) by the Principal. They don't qualify as exceptions. When your fundamental human rights depend on the whim of somebody else, you have no rights--and surely if you have a brain in your head you know that. All the "pilot" projects in the country aren't much more than some colossal trickery on the part of State schooling, a way to vent pressure that might otherwise build and jeopardize the main part of the business.

Around the year 1840 the French philosopher Comte, who had such a great influence on American business and social work, laid down a formula to create a teacher proletariat which could serve the State's purposes best: it would be drawn from people who had light ties to family, to place, to property, to private enthusiasm, to ideology, to religion, to community. Docility above all else was to be sought, tractable men and women. No independent thinkers need apply.

That formula hasn't changed a stick. Who can say honestly that Comte's formula was ignored? Even the humane stream of theory out of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart, Parker and Dewey doesn't bear very close scrutiny--the operation of schools are meant to serve collective, State purposes. No independent thinkers better apply to progressive schools either, and the ones that do are in for a *rocky* ride.

Real people don't ever serve an *idea* without changing it drastically; only cookie-cutter people do that. We don't need to "form" any more teachers like that, the woods are already full of them and state compulsion schooling and television will guarantee an abundance for the future. Our society makes incomplete people a renewable resource.

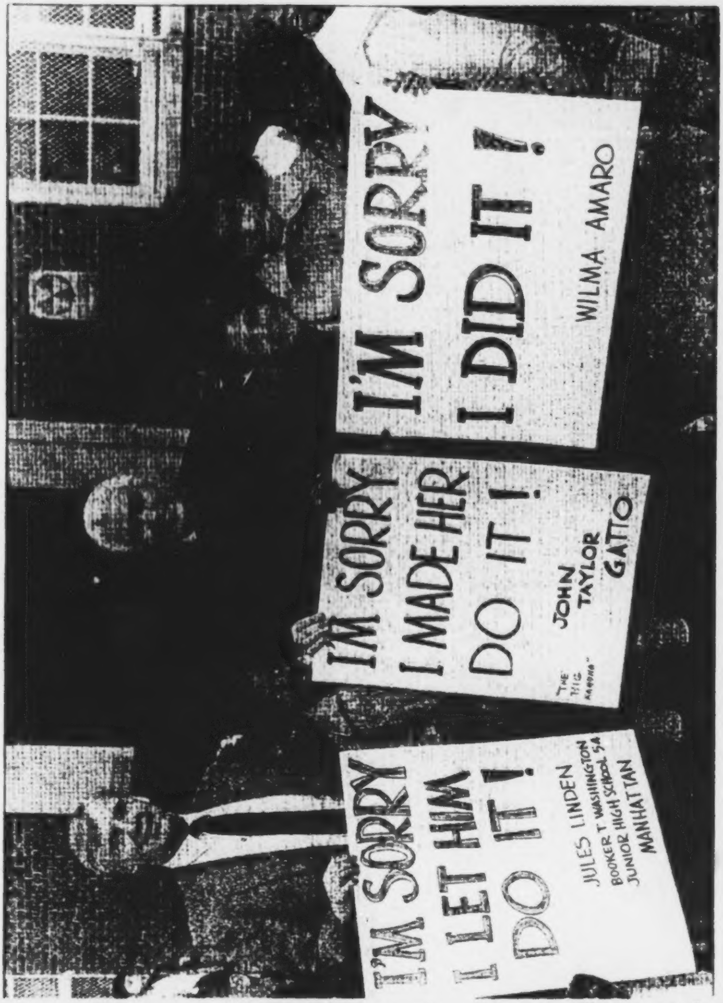
What regular engagements with single-age children in confinement cells do to public schoolteachers isn't pretty and it isn't easily reversible. A few casual encounters with other grown-ups in the same boat isn't enough ballast to give a life *weight*--teachers threaten to leave the ground at any minute because they are unbearably light. It's not a matter of intelligence or good will. If deliberate or circumstantial training has left a teacher with no genuine skill, no categorical family, no God, no community, no culture, what on earth business has the State *compelling* young people to share the same cell with them?

Parents should ask, "Can you build a house, build a boat, grow food, make clothing, repair things, defend yourself, sing a song? If your answer is "No," then what business do you have with my child?"

My point is you can't form teachers; nobody's that smart. The unstated premises of teacher training are all flatly wrong and would be rejected in horror by all of us if they were brought out of the cellar to be looked at. We've gotten into this mess by linking together a long chain of false assumptions; at some point the economy will suffer because they are so expensive to maintain. You can, however, help to form teachers by deciding what impressive human beings need to get that way and assembling those things for teachers.

Once you set your goal as the vision of a complete human being, then the smaller priority of forming a good teacher will take care of itself. Complete human beings are always drawn on a singular blueprint that is innate in each one of us--time to deep-six John Locke's *tabula rasa* child,and B.F. Skinner's operant conditioning; both. The first is flatly wrong and the second is such a certain scheme to mutilate the complex spirit that its proponents should be regarded as criminals. The minute we begin to think of people as types or classes or as interchangeable in any important way, the game is lost.

If we are machines, the word "education" has no meaning, nor does any form of schooling make the slightest bit


I'M SORRY I DID IT!
WILMA AMARO
I'M SORRY I MADE HER DO IT!
JOHN TAYLOR GATTO
I'M SORRY I LET HIM DO IT!
JULES LINDEN
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 54
MANHATTAN

From an AP wire service photo to the *Albany Times Union*: John Taylor Gatto (center, wearing happy smile and practicing what he preaches), his principal Jules Linden, and members of his class - in particular, his investigative student "pollutor" Wilma Amaro, looking sheepishly pleased at her power to arouse the attention of the reporters and photographers, and hopefully, the public.

of sense. Machines have no obligation to be programmed by other machines. " Purpose" only makes sense in the presence of Free Will. If we're going to fuss about teacher formation at all I'll just assume we're on the same wave length about this, because otherwise you're nutty as a fruitcake; we need to keep a sharp eye out for determinists and slap a "Kick Me" sign on their backs.

If we're going to form teachers, then, or help in forming teachers would be more accurate because the main part of the work is out of our hands since people aren't machines and we aren't God, we have to see that the goal is forming a complete human being, because incomplete people tend to be miserable or angry or indifferent or dependent.

I've found the easiest and least confusing place to start is with a job of sculpture: knocking away the material that keeps the human image from emerging–what constraints keep the teacher in the deadly state of incompletion they find themselves? Once you see the obstacle clearly, you can focus like a laser on burning it away. Think of the chisel setting the innate image free.

If anyone thinks I might be overstating the case of incompletion I'd ask them to consider what other reason could possibly explain the vast silence of millions of teachers on policy matters in education, or in political and social matters generally throughout this and the last century? I don't mean the political activism of teacher unions, because collective institutions are never the voice of individuals but some pale averaging of limited special interest.

Why is this uncanny *silence* not part of the school debate anywhere? What accounts for this terrible phenomenon?--that ought to interest anyone who preserves the Christian tradition of caring, loving, helping which is one of the foundation stones of Western society. Shouldn't these mute millions be given back their tongues? In ancient times slaves who were set to guard a secret or do a horrible deed had their tongues ripped out; it's not good public policy to have silent teachers.

Every now and then you hear an Escalante or a Marva Collins reacting to oppression; usually after they've been driven out of their school. It isn't enough.

And doesn't your intuition tell you that the physical immobility and isolation imposed on teachers is a bad thing, and the regulated time and subordination? Anyone who did these things consistently to his own child would be guilty of child abuse; the effect on teachers is just as bad. After they do their work with children, they have to come out into the light of day and live among us all. The real stinger in the Golden Rule is the inevitable reciprocity that follows mistreatment; the bad energy gets passed around and back to you.

You teach who you are. You teach who you are and were as a son or daughter; that's an important part of completing your humanity and a necessary honoring of the world's most basic institution. You teach who you are as a parent yourself and a relation, and if you aren't these things you teach *why not,* even if never a word is said. I've started with some very human compartments of a complete man/woman because they are the ones we customarily ignore. There are others, of course: sportsman, gambler, fighter, lover.

If you make a list of the parts of a complete life that come to mind, each of them will suggest definite curriculum exercises which involve reading, writing, arithmetic, critical thinking, explorations, rhetoric, science, etc.

I'll make a stab at this without any pretense of being comprehensive; these are what came to my mind after 5 minutes' thinking; a different list or a different method of attack might come to yours.

The Archetype of a Complete Person (Teacher) Has These Dimensions:

Teaching
Administration
Policy-Making
Learning
Religion
Community Participation
Private Interests
Philanthropy
Family:
    a) as son or daughter
    b) as father or mother
    c) as relative
    d) as historian,respecter of the dead.
Gambler
Fighter

Neighbor
Craftsman
Artist
Adventurer
Naturalist
Creator
Entrepreneur
Servant
Master
Friend
Judge
Priest
Sportsman
Lover

And any complete person has a dark side, too; people who seem to be too good to be true *are* too good to be true. That's why children don't trust teachers, although they couldn't put the idea into words. They know we lie because they can look inside themselves and see the dark side: either they are freaks or we are liars.

If we are to re-member our humanity, here are a bunch of arms and legs to sew back onto teachers. Then we need to make these things part of the curriculum so that as the teacher teachers, he/she is able to clearly remember being whole. That's the end I consciously worked for for at least half my teaching career--to make myself whole--and it explains the otherwise shocking confession that I did nothing in the classroom that wasn't directly useful to me. Everything I undertook, without exception, was to fill in a gap in myself. That's not an exaggeration to make a point but a precise description of how I approached my work on a daily basis.

The fallout from struggling to be whole is all I had to give my students, but I was honest and open about that. The hierarchical *ministration* model of schooling,* the gift to the 20th century of G. Stanley Hall, Frederick Taylor,Thorndike, Columbia, Hopkins, the University of Chicago and other mills grinding salt is an ugly and very expensive lie to maintain. You can neither "teach" teachers nor can you order them about without ruining their value. I'm tempted to shout to the quarter of a million teacher trainers who clutter the colleges and schools,"For God's sake,get a job!" but I realize, at bottom, that's everyone's problem--building an economy that makes sense so most of us can have real work instead of "make work."

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* You cannot be someone else's minister unless they choose you of their own free will, a lesson schoolmen never learned.

But what if I were in your position, struggling honorably to set up a teacher *formation* program so your Institute can have a worthwhile agenda? Well,I would consider, in light of the above, who might have the most to contribute to a young man or woman thinking about teaching. And I'd assemble the candidates and the counselers together in some retreat where they could interact productively.

Who would the best teachers of teachers *be*? Let me start with old people at the ends of their lives looking back. What could they have been helped to know that now they realize was missing?

Can you see how valuable such information is and yet how ignorant any one of us is in this area because we have allowed a bankrupt vision of expertise guide our thinking? What wise man or expert would be so rash and arrogant to answer this question? It can only be answered at the source. The resource is inexhaustible, it just takes the first Fetzer Institute to show us all how to look.

The second great resource which is never tapped lies in failed teachers struggling to understand. I learned a little but not very much from good teachers, but a world of insight from the despair and self-loathing of bad teachers, and the bitter anger of indifferent teachers. Find these people: some will have quit or been fired, but not many; most will still be in the classroom. Some are honest enough to come forward to talk to candidates.

The most magnificent single resource which the business overlooks deliberately, and all the fancy conferences and institutes and retreats and colloquia, is the huge number of children oppressed by schooling. We ignore them not because they can't be insightful but because we do not dare to face them as equals--the extremity of what we have done to them allows no convincing justification. Children are locked up for the convenience of *a few adults*, not at the collective decision of a consensus. It may appear that way now that they have been so confined for over a century, but the most shallow reading of history will disclose the truth. Hardly ever have a teacher formation meeting without children in attendance! If that seems to be a guarantee that the participants will be uncomfortable, there is your most compelling reason to do it. How can you "form" anything without altering its natural state?

The point of view of the victims of this failed institution is the best and most potent tool to change it, time to put on the back burner the advice of the people who made the business this way in the first place,and the people who make a good living maintaining it as it is.

Only with complete people or those dedicated to the struggle for completion can you realistically begin to talk about what a teacher should deliver. How people are made complete deserves, I think, to be near the center of the initial focus.

FALSE CHOICES?

Review by Michael Traugot

We have published articles about educational "choice" in previous issues of this newsletter, from both sides of the argument, pro and con. I have personally been trying for a long time to get some kind of handle on the situation, to learn enough that I could arrive at some definitive opinion as to whether and what extent school choice would be a good idea. I have found it to be a rather complex question, though some advocates of both sides come on like it is really simple.

I know that many members of NCACS think public and private school choice would be a good idea, both from a general dislike of bureaucracy and government dictation, and because, as "private" schools, they have been doing the actual work of educating kids for years, largely without a cent of government money, while continuing to pay taxes for education, which are used by the public schools. It only seems fitting that they should receive some of that tax money for doing the actual job of education. Still, there seem to be compelling reasons not to just go ahead and declare open school choice a reality, without first considering what the results might be for all sectors of society.

In their publication *False Choices: Why School Vouchers Threaten Our Children's Future*, the editors of *Rethinking Schools* make the case against all-out public and private school choice better and clearer than I have ever seen it before. The basic plan for school choice revolves around a voucher system. Tax moneys collected for education would be divided up evenly among all students, who would then get to choose—presumably with their parents' help—which schools they wished to attend, public or private. This competition, the "free-market" aspect of the program, would presumably lead to a general increase in quality, as poor schools become "poor" in the other sense, failing to attract students, and therefore funds. They would presumably improve or close down. Public schools are presently prevented from improving, according to this argument, because individual schools cannot hire and fire teachers at will, based on their own judgment, and because they must accept all the students from their district, all of whom are forced to go to that one school system. The prescription for breaking the "gridlock" is, as John Taylor Gatto puts it, to end the "state monopoly" on schooling. Give each student an equal share of the tax money collected for education, allow him/her to attend any school s/he chooses, and allow schools to accept or not accept any students they want; that is the solution, according to school choice advocates.

But, when you read this publication, you hear the other side and begin to wonder. The scenario most feared by the publishers of *Rethinking Schools* (who are dedicated public school teachers in the Milwaukee, WI public school system), is that each child will be awarded a stipend in the form of a voucher, but that the amount of that voucher will not be sufficient for a decent education for any child (some have suggested rates as low as $1000, certainly not enough to provide a good education, unless you have volunteer teachers). This would leave wealthy Americans in a strong position to educate their own children, and those of low income in a terrible position to do so, since they would have no funds to supplement the vouchers. The tax rate for education could easily go down, so that the wealthy would be paying less for education taxes than they are now, plus receiving the amount of the voucher toward sending each of their children to the kind of prep school George Bush attended. A good break for them, at the expense of the poor and middle class, whose tax break on education would be less significant than that of the rich, but whose public schools would no longer receive the amount of money they do currently, which in many cases isn't enough in the first place.

> Financial realities will make it impossible to serve student populations similar to those in the public schools contrary to Whittle's claims. The poorer the student, the fewer dollars he or she brings to the school, and the more at-risk the student, the more difficult and costly the education. The incentive to maximize profits is inherently at odds with the social responsibility borne by the public schools to educate such students. The pressures of the marketplace will force the project to select those students who can pay, or to choose, subtly, those poor students who can succeed. Deepening the wedge between the educationally advantaged and disadvantaged, between rich and poor, between whites and people of color, is contrary to the American dream. Inventing a system for the best and ignoring the rest rends the social and cultural fabric in a nation struggling to fashion a new e pluribus unum.
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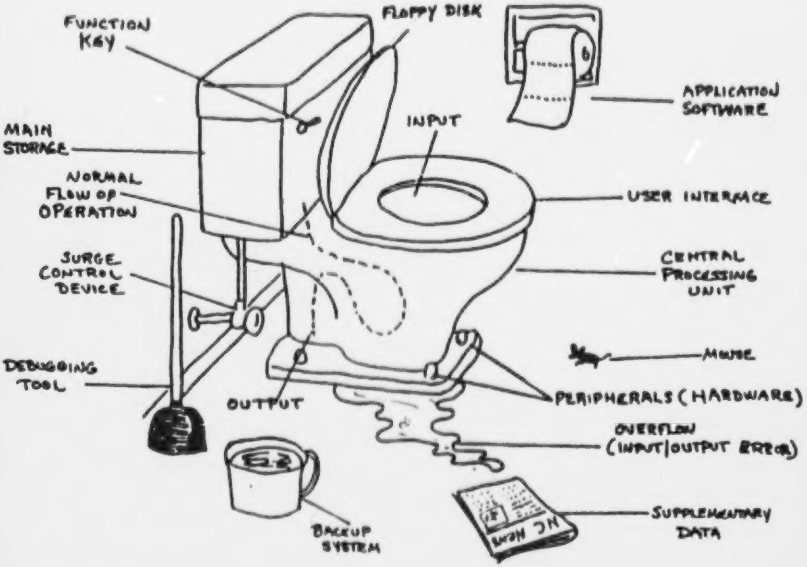
> From "Chris Whittle's Trojan Horse," by Anthony J. Alvarado, printed originally in New York *Newsday* 7/13/92, reprinted in *False Choices, Rethinking Schools' Special Edition*, p. 20, and re-reprinted from the *National Coalition News*, Winter, 1993, pp. 13-16.

There are many other arguments on both sides of the issue. For example, total choice advocates say that the "free market" system will weed out bad schools and raise the level of education in general. Opponents counter that the "free market" system has already made a mess of our health system, and would make our education system even worse. Total choice advocates say that our public education system is already a mess; opponents counter that at least it represents a commitment by the entire society to educate every child, a commitment that the voucher system would undermine.

Since Clinton and Gore won the election, it seems obvious that the Bush plan for complete public and private school choice will not be instituted, at least on a federal level, during the next four years. However, there will be lots of public pressure at all levels, especially in individual states, to make some kinds of changes in this direction. NCACS members will probably be involved in these efforts, including trying to educate Clinton and Gore to the fact that "private" schools are no longer simply prep schools for the rich. I think it is very important that anyone who joins the fray understand as fully as possible all the consequences of any plan he or she is advocating.

Therefore, I strongly recommend that you read this publication and integrate its information into your personal mental data banks before aligning yourself with one side or the other. And, carry on your educational efforts despite this controversy. It looks like the vast majority of American youth will continue to be educated in public schools, and so the way we can influence the big picture the most is to keep on with our successful educational efforts and publicize the best of what we have to offer to public as well as independent schools.

Reprinted from the National Coalition News, *Winter, 1993, pp. 13-16.*


Understanding the Technology

FUNCTION KEY
FLOPPY DISK
APPLICATION SOFTWARE
INPUT
MAIN STORAGE
NORMAL FLOW OF OPERATION
USER INTERFACE
SURGE CONTROL DEVICE
CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT
MOUSE
DEBUGGING TOOL
OUTPUT
PERIPHERALS (HARDWARE)
OVERFLOW (INPUT/OUTPUT ERROR)
SUPPLEMENTARY DATA
NC NEWS
BACKUP SYSTEM

From Gene Lehman's LUNO newsletter,
31960 SE Chin St., Boring, OR 97009

BUILDING COMMUNITY IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

by Mary Leue

Since childhood I have been fascinated with education—or, more properly, with school. The fascination began with the schools I myself had attended, starting, most significantly, with my first grade, which I spent with my grandmother, who had been a teacher in her youth. I remember very clearly the books we read together, the little red spelling frame we used, the abacus we played with, the little, slant-ceilinged room that served as our classroom. It left an indelible impression on me about school. I developed a lifelong love of reading, and during my middle childhood years spent many a happy hour sitting on the floor of the children's reading room in our town's public library. Reading Louisa May Alcott's *Little Men*, and then *Jo's Boys*, started a yearning within me for having this experience myself of actually having my own school, which would run the way I wanted it to run. Actually, this fantasy dovetailed right in with the way I myself had been brought up in a family of six kids and parents who took their role of providing children with wonderful experiences seriously. During my middle childhood and early adolescent years, we all camped, mountain-climbed, sailed, swam, skiied, tobogganed, rock-climbed, cooked, weeded gardens, cleaned house, and got read to every night. In fact, so enthusiastic were my parents to do these things with us that they too often forgot to allow us to choose our own activities. I remember more than once hiding in a closet that had a light in it, sitting on the floor and reading one of my precious books while the hue and cry went on all around me to join in the family activity. It's only in looking back, that I can fully appreciate what I received.

Many years later, during the sixties, after all but one of my five kids had reached high school age, I read A.S. Neill's *Summerhill*, and all of the disparate and apparently incompatible ingredients for school that I had had sloshing around inside me throughout the years of my life finally came together into a pretty clear notion of the school I would one day start. It wouldn't be filled with prescribed activities, and yet, the richness would be there—somehow. I wasn't sure quite how.

Here's how it actually happened. We lived in Texas for nine years during the fifties because of my husband's teaching job, and four of my five kids were in public school there. When we moved up north to Albany in 1962 and all five of my kids were now in Albany's public schools, I was faced for the first time with the regimentation and inhumanness of city schools. My fourth child, Ellen, now in third grade, who had blossomed in the relaxed atmosphere of her small second-grade class in Texas, now began to shrink timidly when it came time to head off to school. In fact, her eyesight, which was normal at the beginning of that year, had pulled back to a near-handicap degree of near-sightedness by the following June! I only discovered for myself why this was happening when I was summoned to a parent/teacher conference in the middle of the school year. Ellen's teacher, in this class for the so-called "Academically talented," which the kids themselves called, more accurately, "Animal trained!" turned out to be a tyrannical martinet who ran her classroom as though it were a military establishment!

As a result of this belated realization, the yeast of change began to rise in the dough of my own inner feeling about school. It was high time! I had ignored the effects of public education on my first four, because the problems hadn't been acute. But when my fifth child Mark reached fifth grade, and began to hurt even more than his sister Ellen, I let him persuade me to take him out and teach him at home. It was a big step to have taken, in my own eyes, involving a basic deviation from all the accepted norms of the society. Doing that can be scary, in a status/money-oriented society. The myth prescribes twelve years of maximum striving for good grades in school in order to compete successfully for the glittering prizes.

I know now that it's not real. Why is it so hard for more of us to get it through our heads that schooling is more of a deterrent than an aid? Myths sometimes die hard, I guess, particularly when there is risk involved to people we love! I had to defy that myth in order to find out for myself. Well, it has turned out to be everything I had hoped for. Mark, at 34, is fine, happily married, with two extraordinary kids. They live in a small, western Massachusetts village, in the life of which they are all actively involved. I needn't have worried about Mark's economic future. He is highly successful and totally happy building repairing and selling magnificent stringed instruments. And he is in no way culturally impaired! The oldest of his kids, Ian, is already, at the age of seven, years ahead of most of his age peers in competence, curiosity, and breadth of understanding and enjoyment of life! They have managed to work out an informal arrangement with Ian's first-grade teacher at the local village school whereby he spends as much time at school as he chooses and the rest at home. Ian is totally self-motivated, reads omnivorously and constantly, writes stories and letters, loves doing arithmetical sums and puzzles, and spends time happily with his father in his shop, learning to work with wood. Madeline, his little sister, at the age of four is as articulate as most kids more than twice her age, and busy, busy, busy all day long, playing with Ian and the day-care kids Helene takes care of during the week.

Taking that first step of allowing Mark to drop out of school, and then taking those that naturally followed from that first one until we ended up with a full-fledged alternative Pre-K through 8th ungraded school which has grown into a community. Having seen the results of our kids' experiences in the school over a period of more than 23 years, there is now no doubt in my mind that any family that wishes a better life for its kids can arrange it, although not necessarily as I did. So that's not the issue I'd like to focus on. There are two issues I'd like to pursue: questions that concern me greatly. I'm not at all sure they can be dealt with separately. One is, is good education possible, in a mass, governmentally-mandated system? John says no. In some ways, I hope it is, at least for the near future. So then, granting hypothetically that the answer to the first question be yes, the question is, can we transform our present school system to provide really good education in the true sense of the word? Can we transform it so that it will do the job it was intended to do — namely, to provide our kids with a setting in which they can thrive, can become *themselves* in the best, most inclusive sense of the word. According to my Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, the Latin word *Educare*, meaning to bring up a child, comes originally from *educere*, to bring forth or out. We aren't there to pour it in, but to draw it forth from the child himself! That cannot be said too often!

Looking at that question of what good education is, I have come to believe that it is impossible to think of "education" in the abstract. For me, it has to do with people—pupils/teachers/parents. And these folks come in all sizes and flavors. One's own experiences inevitably color one's ideas about education, both positively and negatively. I realize also that it is impossible to separate school from the context of our country and its values. School is a mirror of who we are. And we, in turn, are a mirror of what we have learned in school and at home. So my question boils down to how to get hold of the end of the tangle of yarn so as to begin to untangle it. What do we do?

My friend John Gatto has pointed out, in terms that make tremendous good sense to me, that the problem with schools at bottom is one of institutions, and that what is really wrong with the institution of school is what is wrong in general with institutions as networks to serve our social goals. Instead of trying to compete with John, I'd like to read out to you a pretty good-sized slice of his brilliantly provocative analysis, written as a response to a proposal for the enlargement of schooling as an answer to the school crisis. I have transposed the order of some of his remarks to fit my own purposes, so I hope you will forgive the lèse majesté involved, John:

> A surprising number of otherwise sensible people find it hard to see why the scope and reach of our formal schooling networks should not be increased—by extending the school day or year, for instance—in order to provide an economical solution to the problems posed by the decay of the American family. One reason for their preference, I think, is that they have trouble understanding the real difference between communities and networks, or even the difference between families and networks. Because of this confusion they conclude that replacing a bad network with a good one is the right way to go. Since I disagree so strongly with the fundamental premise that networks are workable substitutes for families, and because from anybody's point of view a lot more school is going to cost a lot more money, I thought I'd tell you why, from a schoolteacher's perspective, we shouldn't think more school but less...
>
> In the growth of human society, families came first, communities second, and only much later came the institutions set up by the community to serve it. Most institutional rhetoric—the proclaiming of what is important—borrows its values from individual families that work well together...
>
> People who admire our school institution usually admire networking in general and have an easy time seeing its positive side, but they overlook its negative aspect—that networks, even good ones, take the vitality from communities and families. They make solutions to human problems mechanical, "by the numbers", when a slow, organic process of self-awareness, self-discovery, and cooperation is what is required if any solution is to stick...
>
> Networks like schools are not communities in the same way that school training is not education. By preempting 50 percent of the total time of the young, by locking young people up with young people exactly their own age, by ringing bells to start and stop work, by asking people to think about the same thing at the same

time in the same way, by grading people the way we grade vegetables—and in a dozen other vile and stupid ways—network schools steal the vitality of communities and replace it with an ugly piece of mechanism. Nobody survives these places with his humanity intact, not kids, not teachers, not administrators, and not parents.

The fragmentation caused by excessive networking creates diminished humanity, a sense our lives are out of control, because they are. If we face the present school and community crisis squarely, with hope of finding a better way, we need to accept that schools—as networks—create a large part of the agony of modern life. We don't need more schooling, we need less...

Nearly a century ago a French sociologist wrote that every institution's unstated first goal is to survive and grow, not to undertake the mission it has nominally staked out for itself. Thus the first goal of government postal service is to provide protection for its employees and perhaps a modest status ladder for the more ambitious ones; its first goal is not to deliver the mail. The first goal of a permanent military organization is not to fight wars but to secure, in perpetuity, a fraction of the national wealth to distribute to its personnel...

...If these examples trouble you, think of the New York City public school system where I work, one of the largest business organizations on planet Earth. While the education administered by this abstract parent is ill-regarded by everybody, the institution's right to *compel* its clientèle to accept such dubious service is still guaranteed by the police. And forces are gathering to expand its reach still further—in the face of every evidence it has been a disaster for all its history.

Particularly over the past century and a half in the United States spokesmen for institutional life have demanded a role above and beyond service to families and communities. They have sought to command and prescribe as kings used to do, though there is an important difference—in the case of ancient kings once beyond the range of their voices and trumpets you could usually do what you pleased, but in the case of modern institutions the reach of technology is everywhere—there is no escape if the place where you live and the family you live in cannot provide sanctuary...

As we approach the 21st century it is correct to say that the U.S. has become a nation of institutions where

> it used to be a nation of communities. Large cities have great difficulty supporting healthy community life, partly because of the constant coming and going of strangers, partly because of space constrictions, partly because of poisoned environments, but mostly because of the constant competition of institutions and networks for the custody of children and old people, and to monopolize the time of everyone else in between. By reserving young and old from the working life of places, and by reserving the working population from the lives of young and old, a fundamental disconnection of the generations has occurred. The griefs that arise from this have no synthetic remedy and no vibrant, satisfying communities can come into being where young and old are locked away...
>
> A community is a place that faces people at each other over time in all their human variety, good parts, bad parts, and all the rest. Such places promote the highest quality of life possible, lives of engagement and participation. This happens in unexpected ways but it never happens when you've spent more than a decade listening to other people *talk*, and trying to do what they tell you to do, trying to *please* them after the fashion of schools. It makes a real difference lifelong if you can avoid that training—or if it traps you...
>
> What gives the atmosphere of remote country towns and other national backwaters a peculiarly heady quality of fundamental difference is not simply a radical change of scenery from city or suburb, but the promise offered of near-freedom from institutional intervention into family life. Big Father doesn't watch over such places closely. Where his presence is felt most is still in the schools, which even there grind out their relentless message of anger, envy, competition, and caste-verification in the form of grades and "classes." But a home-life and community exist there as antidote to the poison.

That's the end of the quotation. I think it's all essential to an understanding of what's wrong. In John's terms, my daughter Ellen's bad school experience in Albany happened mainly because of this factor of the heightened stakes involved in attempting to teach kids in crowded cities. It's mainly in cities that the acuteness of the problem exists! John says that school needs to be cut down to size, maybe even eliminated altogether in such places! I don't think that is likely to happen—and I'm not sure that would be a such a good idea unless we have a pretty good notion of what we would put in its place! As John says so eloquently, the damage to families and to community has already occurred! Would we be ready to cope with no school, or even with less school, no matter how insane? I'm not sure. City parents, perhaps a majority of them, have become too dependent on school for all sort of functions—baby-sitter, disciplinarian, time-manager, supplier of at least one meal a day—and just plain dumping ground—for that to happen: at least, not in the near future, given the tenor of most people's lives at the present, especially in cities. So I'd like to look at the question—particularly in cities: if we can't sit around waiting for schools to wither away, like the State in the Marxist dialectic, what can we do about the mess we have on our hands? Specifically, what are the ingredients that *could* make a school a good place for kids, at least for now.

For openers, I'd say that John's list of don'ts is about as good a place to start as any. Kids are pliant, adaptive and easy to please, naturally curious, filled with bounding energy and natural affection for anyone who truly likes them. So "doing school" should really be the easiest thing in the world! What you would "do" is what's left over when you understood what NOT to do! So you wouldn't preempt half of their total time, you wouldn't lock them up with kids exactly their own age, you wouldn't ring bells to start and stop work, you wouldn't ask

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The question reminds me of an occasion when Betsy and I, both of whom are RN's and direct entry midwives as well as longtime teachers in the school, were attending a birth in the hospital as labor coaches a few years ago. The young nurse who had been assigned to this mother in labor came in to hook up the fetal monitor. We asked her not to do so, and, in fact, not to intervene in any other way in this woman's process that was not absolutely necessary. Birth, we told her, is a natural process, and interventions of whatever kind are more likely to slow down the labor than to accelerate it. She looked astounded and, evidently, felt totally disconfirmed, and exclaimed to us, "But then what *am* I supposed to be doing?" It was a very real question in her mind! I suspect many if not most teachers in the public schools would have a similar question if they were suddenly deprived of all their usual role-centered activities. It doesn't seem to dawn on them that the role-centeredness of their outlook is an artifact of the institutional nature of school, as it is of birth in a hospital. Why do we find it so easy to assume that it is perfectly OK to ask people to adapt to institutional rules and customs rather than the other way around? I suppose the answer is that that is how most of us became habituated to being when we were growing up, and that is also how our parents defined our lives, as well as their own. Time for a change! It's not working! Not that it ever has—but at this juncture, the statistics of disaster are so frequent and so drastic that almost no one can pretend things are OK with city schools and the kids in them!

OK. So can we help teachers and parents to alter their model of what a school is supposed to do? How might we get from where we are now to where we wanted to go, with both teachers and parents? How, and in what order ought changes to occur? Well, one major problem that has been identified by all sorts of studies is the massive failure to educate of mass education. I was very struck a few years ago by a keynote address delivered by a friend of mine, John Potter, who was the director (at that time) of the alternative Somerset School in Washington, D.C., to the Small Schools Network, of which he was then the president. John was saying that almost anything is possible if only the institution is small enough so that people deal with each other face-to-face, and so that students never have to feel overwhelmed by the sense of being merely a face in the crowd. But in fact, schools are still consolidating in cities and out in the country as well. They really have to if we are even to make a start on reining in the runaway educational budgets we are currently saddled with! Governor Cuomo is proposing to combine several school districts in New York State that have lost population. The teachers' unions, administrators, consultants and the firms that supply school equipment are objecting. After all, as John says, education is one of the most lucrative businesses in the country! That is my experience as well. But it has to happen sooner or later. So can something be done about the size of our schools as creators of mass conformity, in the face of such economic necessity?

Well, yes and no. We can't do much about the overall size of schools per se. But we can begin realizing that the problem of regimentation is not a *direct* result of size, but comes from the nature of institutions in general. Inside every school building there are classrooms and staff rooms, and inside those rooms are groups of people who meet together regularly. We *could* learn to make these face-to-face changes in the direction of community among these small groups of people, if we could fund a will to act So, if a school were too big to be dealt with wholesale, it could be re-defined as a congeries of small, semi-autonomous units manageable by small groups of people of all sizes. Within each of these small groups, the principles of self-governance and full participation in policy-making could be established as a *sine qua non* for the transformation of the status quo. I know this is true, because it is how, for example, the Alternative Community School in Ithaca, New York, a highly successful alternative public high school under the leadership of principal Dave Lehman, has been operating for over 20 years. And the key to Dave's success is real democracy—shared governance in all matters pertaining to the operation of the school.

I don't know quite why, but it seems to me that a lot of professional educators of the alternative persuasion, such as Waldorf or Montessori teachers, who in every other respect have great ideas for teaching children, too often tend to slough off this one crucial ingredient in group process, calling it a "libertarian bias," in contrast with what they call "holistic education." They focus on spiritually-oriented curricular content and attitudinal compassion *toward* children as the key to good education—which is fine as far as it goes, and in practice, probably often involves a democratic outlook as well—but that never seems to be what they write about. And yet, it is my profound belief that without self-governance, without some form of genuinely democratic process, nothing really works well for very long, and that when it is present, whether or not expressed in a formalized manner, everything else works well. Permitting the unfolding of true selfhood as the sole and proper end of real education involves transforming an institution to a community—and this means allowing for real democracy in action. Of course, that's not a complete proposal for changing our educational system—but it's where I would start. To me a necessary if not a sufficient condition for real change.

And outside the school are hundreds of families who send their kids to it but may not—in fact, probably do not—have much of an idea about what goes on inside their kids' schools. Involving parents in city schools, too often in most schools, is a huge taboo. That is one of the ways we fragment and demoralize families. So I would say that where I would begin to take hold of the end of the tangled institutional ball of yarn which we have created would be in terms of *all* of the people involved in schools—which means beginning to look at a school as a community. Is this possible?

In this connection I am remembering Nat Hentoff's account, in *Our Children Are Dying*, of Dr. Elliot Shapiro's principalship during the nineteen-sixties of P.S. 119, an elementary school in central Harlem with eleven hundred children ranging from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. I say it might be a good place to start, just because P.S. 119 was such an unlikely place for anything of value to occur. Teachers' salaries were small, the teachers themselves of very varied ability and understanding, the classes were too big and the neighborhood too degraded by racism and abject poverty to permit an ideal atmosphere for any kid in that school. Shapiro himself characterized these children as "dying" because so many of them were going all the way through the school without once experiencing the awakening that occurs when one's innate mental aliveness is being regularly stimulated. So we're not talking about ideal circumstances. What Shapiro did, out of his own outrage against the conditions of the school itself was to allow his families—parents and children both—to organize a strike against the school board for better school conditions. But let me give you a flavor of how it was before the strike. First, a conversation Hentoff had with a teacher named Mrs. Jackson in which she was commenting on Shapiro as a principal:

> ... My first year here I was walking with another teacher who'd been at P.S. 119 a while and we saw him come out of a house on Eighth Avenue that I wouldn't have had the courage to go into without a guard. If then. "What on earth is he doing *there*?" I asked. "Oh," she said casually, "He's looking for a child. He does it all the time." I tell you he was stepping out of there as if he

were coming out of his own house. That man will go any place and do anything." She laughed.

Now hear Shapiro himself.

> ... In New York City the United Federation of Teachers is providing a structure of support so that the teacher *can* be lively, energetic and inventive without fear of reprisals ... Let us [also] grant the essential liveliness of our children. How does a teacher make the most of that liveliness, and how can he best avoid dampening it?
>
> Suppose, for example, in a social science lesson, the teacher is talking about this being a democratic society. And a kid says, "Teach, we have no heat at home. What do we do in this democratic society to get heat?" If the teacher doesn't formulate some plan in which the children can participate—picketing or other ways that might change the situation—the children won't buy the lesson. In New York, because of the U.F.T., teachers can work out that sort of plan ... But so far, hardly any New York teachers know the scope of the possibilities in this direction. They don't have a full enough sense of their own strength, through the grievance machinery that's been set up ...

Shapiro was very aware of the problem of the lack of will to make change. Here's a quote:

> ... There's a lot of Eichmann in everybody. ... I'm not talking about overt viciousness. I mean the strong tendency to go along, to conform. Look, while I've been principal of P.S. 119, in any given year more children are *not* educated than *are* educated. What do I do? Picket my own school? Or do I pick those moments when I can do something effective about changing the situation? But there's always the possibility of corruption. As we let time go on, we ourselves develop a vested interest in keeping our mouths shut. We say to ourselves, this isn't the proper time. But any time will be difficult. What it amounts to is to try to keep yourself as conscious as possible of your basic assumptions so that you don't, in some unconscious way, move in a direction that alienates you from yourself and your hopes without you knowing it.

The size of P.S. 119 was one of the biggest factors in Shapiro's awareness of his relative failure to give his kids what they really needed, despite his deep caring about each of them as a person. And yet, institutions like P.S. 119—and there are hundreds of them in our megopolises—need desperately to work to become real communities, if any real change is going to occur. Can they? Yes, I believe they can, and even that it's not very difficult—nor expensive! The issue for me is not one of "can" but of "will." Do we really have the *will* to make these changes? When most people focus on the issue of making changes, it seems to be easier for them to focus on external matters like length of school day and year, like more money, like accountability by teachers, like doing more and better diagnosing of difficulties, like mandating new curricula to combat racism, sexism, drug usage, teen-age pregnancy, AIDS, and rotten teeth! No, I'm not saying we should ignore these issues—but the process of inner transformation I'm speaking about transcends cultural and racial differences and applies across the lines of socio-economic class belonging, geographical location and population density, because it involves issues about people as individuals: people in groups. The specific presenting problems within each child population will vary widely from one school to another, but the dynamics of personal involvement and awareness are universal; and they underlie all the others. We persist in putting Descartes before the horse! He said, "I think, therefore I am." But we need to begin learning to think with our hearts, not our heads!

I believe that when people (of whatever age) begin to see themselves as significant in shaping policy, in having the right both to define and to satisfy their own inner wants, good things start to happen *from within.* I am quite sure that whatever Elliott Shapiro was able to achieve during his tenure at P.S. 119 came about because of his natural awareness of the essential nature of human relationships as the common ingredient beneath the institutional setting of school, out of his understanding of the dynamics of relationship—in short, out of his understanding of the common currency of day-to-day living in family and in community!

Out of this vessel of Shapiro's understanding came a natural realization of the crucial role of the motivation of children themselves, and of their parents as advocates for their children. This is what created his genius in knowing that they, the entire body of his school families, were the key to the success of the school for everyone—both families and teachers—and thus, for the institution itself, in terms of its true goal of educating children! In these terms, I suspect he was a lot more successful than he himself believed.

Thinking over what Hentoff says about Shapiro's kids and his school in the light of our own, I am struck by several considerations. One is that the issue of whether or not his kids learned to read loomed much larger for him than it does in our school, even though the kids he had were quite similar to most of ours. We had to learn not to worry so much about that issue. I had always believed that since ghetto kids have just one chance to "make it" in our society, what mattered most was the internal "tool kit" filled with 3-R goodies they took with them out into the cold, cruel world. I realize now that what we have to give our kids has very little to do with skills acquisition, but a lot to do with spirit, with an inner fire.

The saying, "Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach him how to fish and he will eat for a lifetime" comes to mind. What we discovered was that what we were doing amounted to teaching our kids how to learn! But even that is a misnomer. We weren't teaching them— they were learning it on their own! We were just giving them the space to find out what they wanted to do. Yes, of course we did and do offer modeling for kids of how to find pleasure and satisfaction in school, as in life. We read to them, rock and hug and joke with them, sing songs, kiss their boo-boos, go on walks, hatch eggs, plant beans, feed chickens, milk goats, play ball games, swim in one of the city's public bathhouse pools, chide them for unfairness to smaller kids—although the latter doesn't happen as often as you might think—help them build ships and boxes, go on trips, and generally do all the lovely, natural things kids and grown-ups do together when they're having fun—including the 3 R's, along the way.

But what really happens in our school is a totally mysterious process which takes place within each kid in a totally unique manner that defies quantification or prediction. It is as though there were a little door inside each one, and only that kid has the key. When the child finally finds it, the door opens spontaneously, and the light inside begins to shine outward. You can actually see it beginning to happen! The child's eyes begin to glow softly; her skin to take on a kind of sheen. Her arms and legs work easily and without strain. Her whole energy system is alive and fully present. She stops being accident-prone or fighting aggressively for possessions, or stealing, or isolating, or whatever the manifestations have been of the absence of Self! She begins to enjoy natural interactions with other kids, to be curious and sustain interest for long periods of time, to become as easily absorbed in solitary as in group activities, to sing and dance, to write poetry and draw pictures, to begin practicing skills because she wants to learn them.

This mysterious process is unique to every kid. Because we deal mainly with terribly vulnerable kids, both lower and middle class, both white and non-white, we sometimes lose a kid before this inner process has completed itself. I used to fret about that, but I don't, any more. I've had enough contacts now with former kids who are now in their twenties and thirties to know that even brief contacts can make a crucial difference in the course of their subsequent lives, whether or not they become members of the so-called literate class. I got a call a couple of weeks ago from a girl named Patty, who had been with us for a year during the mid-seventies. I remember her as about as hopeless a "case" as any we ever had. She was ten when she came to us as a school of last resort—big for her age, dog-faced, marked as retarded and delinquent by the public schools, sullen and unapproachable. She derived most of her fun in life by rebellion and disruption of the activities of other kids, or by organizing them into rebellious gangs. She came from a totally disorganized white ghetto family, and found her own way among us mainly by avoiding the things she didn't want to do— or believed she couldn't—and left at the end of the year, apparently unchanged. Well, I was totally wrong, as I have been about a lot of other apparently "hopeless" kids. "Mary," she said to me, "I've been wanting to say something to you for years and I finally decided I just had to do it. I want to apologize for being so hateful to you when I was at the school. One time when I was really mad, you held me and hugged me and wouldn't let me go and finally made me understand you really cared about me. I've been thinking about those days ever since, remembering how much you cared about me. Those were the good days." I asked her about her life now, and she told me she was married, with four kids, two of them her husband's from a previous marriage, that she was living in Pine Hills, a middle class part of the city.

My point is not that Patty's life is ideal because of her year with us—I'm sure it's not— but that, judging by the warmth and articulateness of her voice and manner on the phone, she has a kind of warm, glowing bubble inside her left over from those contacts, and I am quite sure that in some way or another, she passes on that heritage to her kids. And she's only one of a number of kids who have come back to let us know. I remember another—Bernie—who had been a holy terror when she was with us—the fourth child in a white ethnic family of five. Bernie was apparently the only one with enough energy left to rebel, and she kept us hopping! The others were more passively resistant, only secretly delinquent. Bernie, now a sprightly, charming, articulate young woman, attractively dressed, with shining, well-kept hair, who makes her living as an employee in a business in the city, reminded me of my having offered her a baby bottle at the age of five and a secluded, comfortable spot on a mattress in the kitchen to lie down and suck on it at will. She got me to promise not to tell her mother and father, which I did—but the other kids found out and squealed, and we lost the whole family precipitously! I thought we had lost them forever - but lo! here is Bernie, come back to tell us about the lifelong joy of the recollection of that one shining moment, when she got that precious bottle! All to herself! Evidently, that was what she had needed, demoralized and bedraggled as she was, in a family of five demoralized, bedraggled kids, both of whose parents were deeply depressed and indifferent to the demands of parenting. And the interesting thing to me is, Bernie's brothers and sisters are OK too, not just Bernie herself. They're all married, making a living, raising their kids. No, not spectacularly, but at least as well as most middle class products of our public schools!

So my question is, can we grant that real change is possible, given the will to make it? Has, for example, the fact of that extraordinary dedication to the things that mattered at P.S. 119, spread its transformative influence throughout New York City's schools? No, of course not. There aren't enough Elliott Shapiros and John Taylor Gattos around with the courage and the integrity to do what has to be done for these children trapped inside our city schools. And today the situation is far worse than it was during the sixties! Essential schools, magnet schools, merely syphon off a few kids for salvation. The rest are worse off than ever.

Not all of our country's schools are as desperate as New York City's, or as Los Angeles'—but they are bad enough, and getting worse. Our own small city of Albany is no exception. The head of the Bureau of Attendance and Guidance of our public school system who also serves as our liason with the central office and has been a staunch supporter of our school from almost the very beginning, told Chris, one of our teachers, recently that the percentage of children in serious trouble in Albany is rising rapidly, has already reached 15%. Not much by comparison with the statistics of the megopolises, perhaps, but new to us, an alarming harbinger of the future.

I need to add that it is perfectly apparent to me, as to people like John and Ram Dass, that no institutional change—not even one in the direction of self-governance—is going to make real change in our society's way of looking at life on our endangered planet so long as we ignore the centrality of humanness—of the heart as the center of every process that involves people—children or adults. This kind of transformation from within is the only real change that can make our continued existence possible. Ecologically as well as demographically, we are 30 years from irreversible damage all over the planet on the scale that exists now in places like Haiti, according to Capitain Cousteau. Are we getting the message? Can we fund a will that will enable us to begin to grapple with the real revolution that has got to happen? No, not someone else—each of us! As Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi says, "We are *all* Meshiach—the Messiah!" Or if you choose a Christian formulation, "The Kingdom of God is within," said Jesus. In the words of the hundredth psalm:

> Know ye that the Lord, he is God:
> it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves,
> we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
> Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,
> and into his courts with praise:
> be thankful unto him and bless his name.
> For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;
> and his truth endureth to all generations.

The sublime paradox of life is that when we truly belong to ourselves, we belong totally to God! As the physicists have told us, we are holographic fragments of the Universal Hologram, seamlessly reflecting within ourselves God's wholeness—or, as Zalman says, we are a corner patch on God's rainbow tallis—his prayer shawl! When we finally learn to allow this ultimate truth to enter our hearts, all conflicts can cease, and we can begin to live life as it was—and is— intended to be. When the fundamental centrality of the heart is finally accepted as simple truth about life on the planet, as Thich N'hat Hanh tells us, then we can begin to solve the problem of our schools.

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EARTHWATCH:

One of the Roots of *both* the Libertarian and the Green Parties:

HENRY GEORGE
AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF CAPITALISM

by Dr. Robert V. Andelson

With the fall of the Iron Curtain, people all over the world seem to be searching for a "Middle Way." Except in North Korea and Cuba, doctrinaire Marxism has been repudiated virtually everywhere, even by the left. Socialism has become passé. Its adherents are no longer riding the crest of the wave of the future. Even the most energetic apostles of federal meddling, John Kenneth Galbraith, for example, eschew the socialist label.

Yet, on the other hand, the free market economists of the classical period would scarcely recognize capitalism as we know it in America today. Such luminaries of industry and finance as Lee Iacocca and Felix Rohatyn advocate a measure of government intervention that would have seemed entirely insupportable to Cobden or Ricardo. In the political field, the major candidates differ mainly on matters of degree. It is not so much a question of "Shall there be federal aid?" as of "How much federal aid should there be?" or "How shall it be administered?" As long ago as the late 1940s, "Mr. Conservative" himself, Senator Robert A. Taft, sponsored a bill for federal housing. Later, another Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, was the chief architect of the food stamp program, which is itself a *dole*, not just for the poor but, above all, for agribusiness. A

Republican president, Richard Nixon, instituted price controls, and cut the dollar loose from its last tenuous backing with the cynical quip that "we are all Keynesians now."

But what we are presented with, from right to left, is not a coordinated structure embodying the best elements from both sides, not even a well-thought-out attempt at syncretism, but rather a bewildering welter of jerry-built solutions, each one based upon political and emotional considerations and lacking any functional relationship to a unified system of socio-economic truth, let alone any rootage in a grand scheme of teleology or ethics.

A little Socialism here, and a little Capitalism there; a concern for the "public sector" here, and a concession to the profit motive there; a sop to the "underprivileged" here, and a bow to incentive there - put them all together and what have you got? Nothing but a great big rag-bag, a haphazard pastiche of odds and ends without any bones and without any guts!

Nevertheless, there is a middle way. There is a body of socio-economic truth which incorporates the best insights of both Capitalism and Socialism. Yet they are not insights which are artificially woven together to form a deliberate compromise. Instead, they arise naturally, with a kind of inner logic, from the profound ethical distinction which is the system's core. They arise remorselessly from an understanding of the meaning of the commandment: "Thou shalt not steal." This Middle Way is the philosophy associated with the name of Henry George.

I like to picture economic theory as a vast jigsaw puzzle which has been distributed across two tables, one called Capitalism and the other Socialism. But mingled with the genuine pieces of the puzzle are many false pieces, also distributed across both tables. Most of us are either perceptively limited to one table, or else we are unable to distinguish the genuine pieces from the false. But Henry George knew how to find the right pieces, and, therefore, he was able to put the puzzle together, at least in its general outlines. I don't claim that he was infallible or that there isn't further work to be done. But if I find a little piece of puzzle missing here or there, it doesn't shake my confidence in the harmony of the overall pattern he discerned. It doesn't make me want to sweep the puzzle onto the floor and start all over again from scratch.

Henry George was born in 1839 in Philadelphia and died in 1897 in New York City. It was in the San Francisco of the 1870s that he wrote his master-work, *Progress and Poverty*. For the greater part of his adult life he had been a working newspaperman, beginning as an apprentice typesetter and making his way up to the editor's desk. His was a peculiarly Californian saga. His philosophy was forged out of his observation of conditions in a burgeoning new state, where he was able to examine as in a laboratory the genesis and development of social and economic processes.

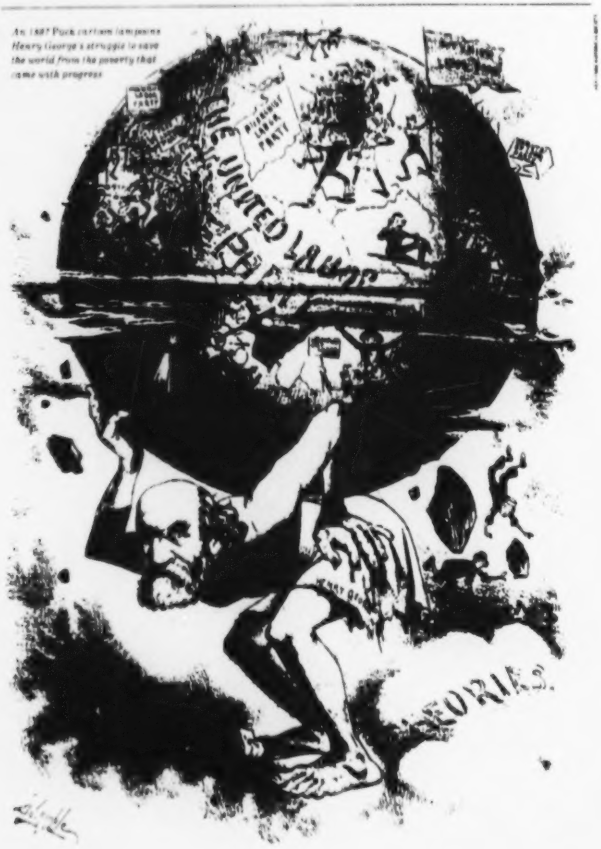
Progress and Poverty has been translated into at least 25 languages. Among books of nonfiction its sale was for many decades exceeded only by the Bible. At Oxford University, in the English literature department, it is used as a model of the finest prose. The rest of Henry George's life was one great crusade for social justice, at the end of which he literally martyred himself by campaigning for public office against his doctor's orders. In the middle of the campaign he died, and was spontaneously accorded the greatest funeral which New York City had ever witnessed.

His genius has been glowingly acknowledged by such renowned figures as educators Nicholas Murray Butler, John Dewey, and Mortimer J. Adler; authors Leo Tolstoy, Aldous Huxley, and Helen Keller; Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Dwight D. Eisenhower; columnists William F. Buckley, Jr., and Michael Kinsley; scientists Alfred Russel Wallace and Albert Einstein; and statesmen Winston Churchill, and Sun Yat-sen. These names cover the entire political spectrum from conservative to liberal, yet all of them saw something of immense value in George's thought.

I'll take time to quote from only one of these testimonials - the one by Dr Sun Yat-sen, the founder and first president of the Chinese republic.

> I intend," he declared. "to devote my future to the welfare of the Chinese people. The teachings of Henry George will be the basis of our program of reform."

I think we may safely say that had Dr. Sun lived to carry out his promise, the Chinese mainland would not today be Red. But Taiwan, where it has been carried out, by no means fully but to a considerable extent, has, as a result, witnessed a spectacular transformation from abysmal poverty to vibrant



An 1887 Puck cartoon lampoons Henry George's struggle to save the world from the poverty that came with progress

According to the (conservative) British humor magazine, *Punch*, in an 1887 issue, Henry George is shown carrying the burden of the world on his back, standing on his theories, for the benefit of various pro-labor radical political groups.

prosperity distributed so as to benefit *all* levels of the population.

For a long time, it was the fashion among academic economists to ignore or patronize Henry George - whether for his lack of formal credentials, for his propensity to mingle moral arguments with economic ones, or for other perceived intellectual crimes even more monstrous. Today, this is becoming less and less the case, although, of course, there were honorable exceptions from the outset. But now we find economists of every stripe, including three Nobel laureates, united in agreement that George has as much to say that is of vital contemporary importance. The list is far too long to read in its entirety, but it includes such names as Milton Friedman, Lowell Hariss, Alfred Kahn, Arthur Laffer, Franco Modigliani, Warren Samuels, Robert Solow, James Tobin, and William Vickrey - the last of whom happens to be the current president of the American Economic Association.

In the preface to the fourth edition of *Progress and Poverty*, Henry George wrote; "What I have done in this book, if I have correctly solved the great problem I have sought to investigate, is, to unite the truth perceived by the school of [Adam] Smith and Ricardo to the truth perceived by the schools of Proudhon and Lasalle; to show that *laissez faire* (in its full true meaning) opens the way to a realization of the noble dreams of Socialism." Let us return now to our illustration of the economic jigsaw puzzle, and take a look at the pieces which George selected from the two tables of Capitalism and Socialism.

We will begin with the Capitalist table. George considered himself a purifier of Capitalism, not its enemy. He built upon the foundations laid by the classical economists. The skeleton of his system was essentially Capitalist. In fact, Karl Marx referred to George's teachings as "Capitalism's last ditch." George believed in competition, in the free market, in the unrestricted operation of the laws of supply and demand. He distrusted government and despised bureaucracy. He was no egalitarian leveler - the only equality he sought was equality of opportunity. Actually, what he intended was to make free enterprise truly free, by ridding it of monopolistic hobbles which prevent its effective operation .

In his book, *The Condition of Labor*, George said:

> We differ from the Socialists in our diagnosis of the evil, and we differ from them in remedies. We have no fear of capital, regarding it as the natural hand-maiden of labor; we look on interest in itself as natural and just; we would set no limit to accumulation, nor impose on the rich any burden that is not equally placed on the poor; we see no evil in competition, but deem unrestricted competition to be as necessary to the health of the industrial and social organism as the free circulation of the blood is to the bodily organism - to be the agency whereby the fullest cooperation is to be secured.

Why did George take so many pieces for the Capitalist table? Because, I think, they are all corollaries of one big piece, namely the moral justification for private property. You see, George, who in private life was a devout Christian, had a stout belief in the God-given dignity of the individual. This dignity, he held, demands that we recognize that the individual possesses an absolute and inalienable right to himself, which is forfeited only when he refuses to accord the same right to others. The right to one's self implies the right to one's labor - to use it, to enjoy it, to give it away, to destroy it, to bequeath it, or even (if one so desires) to bury it in the ground.

Now taxation as ordinarily understood, especially when based upon the "ability to pay" principle, is a denial of this right. It is a denial of it because it represents a tribute levied on the product of an individual's labor. It is a denial of it because it rests upon the assumption that the community at large has the right to assess individuals disproportionately to the benefits which they receive from the community at large. And so George rejects as collectivistic many institutions which most present-day defenders of free enterprise would never dream of questioning - income taxes, tariffs, sales taxes, corporate taxes, personal property taxes, etc. This makes him in one sense an arch-conservative, yet prominent Socialists like Walter Rauschenbusch and George Bernard Shaw have testified that it was Henry George who first kindled their concern for social justice. To understand the reason for this, we must direct our attention to the other table, the table labeled "Socialism."

In fitting together the economic jigsaw puzzle, George took only two pieces from the Socialist table. But what large and what strategic pieces they were! The first of these was his insistence that all persons come into the world with an equal right of access to the goods of nature. The second was his contention that the community has the right to take that which the community produces.

Actually, these pieces had landed on the Socialist table only by default. They had originally been part of the theory of Capitalism, as outlined by John Locke, the Physiocrats, and Adam Smith. But Capitalism in practice ignored them, and so became a distorted caricature. George's notion was to rescue these lost elements, and restore balance and proportion to the Capitalist table.

Now if private property derives its moral justification from the right of a human being to the fruits of his own efforts, clearly the land and the other goods of nature do not fall into the category of private property because no human efforts created them. And the value which attaches to them is not the result of anything their title-holder does to them; it is the result of the presence and activity of the community around them. A man can build a skyscraper in the desert and the ground upon which it stands will not be worth a penny more because of it, yet a city lot with nothing on it may be worth a fortune simply because of the number of people who pass by it daily.

Why, asked Henry George in effect, should private individuals be allowed to fatten upon the unearned increment of land - upon the rise in value which the community creates because of population increase and the growth of public services? Why should certain people be allowed to levy tribute upon others who desire access to their common heritage? But, you say, the present owner may have paid hard-earned money for his land. Has he not therefore a vested right? To this, George would have answered: If one unwittingly buys stolen goods, the rectitude of one's intentions establishes no right against the legitimate owner of those goods.

Henry George was not the first thinker to comprehend the difference between land and other kinds of property. John Locke said that

> God gave the world in common to all mankind. When the 'sacredness' of property is talked of, it should be remembered that any such sacredness does not belong in the same degree to landed property.

William Blackstone wrote:

> The earth, and all things therein, are the general property of all mankind, from the immediate gift of the Creator.

Thomas Paine stated that:

> ...men did not make the earth.... It is the value of the improvements only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property.

According to Thomas Jefferson,

> the earth is given as a common stock for men to labor and live on.

John Stuart Mill wrote:

> The increase in the value of land, arising as it does from the efforts of an entire community, should belong to the community and not to the individual who might hold title.

Abraham Lincoln said:

> The land, the earth God gave to man for his home, sustenance, and support, should never be the possession of any man, corporation, society, or unfriendly government, any more than the air or water, if as much.

In the words of Herbert Spencer,

> ...equity does not permit property in land....The world is God's bequest to mankind. All men are joint heirs to it.

But it was Henry George who emphasized this distinction and placed it in the center of his system. At present we have the ironic spectacle of the community penalizing the individual for his industry and initiative, and taking away from him a share of that which he produces; while at the same time lavishing upon the non-producer undeserved windfalls which it - the community - produces. Henry George built his whole philosophy around the principle:

> Let the individual keep all of that which he produces, and let the community keep all of that which it produces.

Land monopoly is the great monkey-wrench which is caught in the works of the free enterprise system, and which prevents the proper meshing of the gears; it is the hidden cancer which is eating out of the heart of Capitalism. Early in this century, Winston Churchill described its virulent effects in the following words:

> While the land is what is called "ripening" for the unearned increment of its owner, the merchant going to his office and the artisan going to his work must detour or pay a fare to avoid it. The people lose their chance of using the land, the city and state lose the taxes which would have accrued if the natural development had taken place, and all the while the land monopolist has only to sit still and watch complacently his property multiplying in value, sometimes many-fold, without either effort or contribution on his part.
>
> This evil process strikes at every form of industrial activity. The municipality, wishing for broader streets, better houses, more healthy, decent, scientifically

> planned towns, is made to pay more to get them in proportion as it has exerted itself to make past improvements. The more it has improved the town, the more it will have to pay for any land it may now wish to acquire for further improvements.
>
> The manufacturer proposing to start a new industry, proposing to erect a great factory offering employment to thousands of hands, is made to pay such a price for his land that the purchase price hangs around the neck of his whole business, hampering his competitive power in every market, clogging him far more than any foreign tariff in his export competition, and the land price strikes down through the profits of the manufacturer on to the wages of the workman.
>
> No matter where you look or what examples you select, you will see that every form of enterprise, every step in material progress, is only undertaken after the land monopolist has skimmed the cream off for himself, and everywhere today the man or the public body that wishes to put land to its highest use is forced to pay a preliminary fine in land values to the man who is putting it to an inferior use, and in some cases to no use at all. All comes back to the land value, and its owner is able to levy toll upon all other forms of wealth and every form of industry.

Those were the words of Winston Churchill. And if you will examine the history of the great American depressions, you will find that every one of them was preceded by a period of intense land speculation which had an inflationary effect upon the whole economy. In 1836, in 1857, in 1873, in 1893, and in 1929 - in every case the big crash was precipitated by the bursting of the land bubble.

The purely economic ramifications of land monopoly are so vast as to be staggering. Land monopoly does not affect rents alone. It affects wages, prices, production, the cost of government, and the distribution of purchasing power. It is the major cause of slums and blighted areas. It is the greatest single breeder of revolution around the world.

Had it not been for land monopoly, the Bolsheviks could never have gained power in Russia. Mao Tse-Tung and his so-called "agrarian reformers" (and I use the term advisedly) could never have wrested control of China. Fidel Castro would never have arisen in Cuba. Because of land monopoly, El Salvador has endured decades of murderous civil war. Because of land monopoly, the Amazon rain forest is being rapidly destroyed to make room for settlers who have been denied a foothold elsewhere except on terms that offer little better than starvation. These are just a couple of obvious examples, taken almost at random. Because of land monopoly, Latin America and the Middle East are veritable tinder boxes, ready to explode at any moment. We here may not yet have reached that state, but we're moving in that direction. How much longer can we go on propping up a rotten structure by borrowing against the future?

Well, exactly how did George propose to deal with the problem of land monopoly? Did he advocate that privately held land should be expropriated and divided up? Quite the contrary. That remedy is as ultimately ineffective as it is ancient. There is more truth than fiction in the aphorism that the French Revolution delivered the peasants from the aristocrats in order to hand them over to the usurers, and what was true of the peasants was equally true of the soil they tilled. Thus has it ever been with programs of expropriation and redistribution.

Under Henry George's system, private land titles would not be disturbed one iota. No one would be expropriated.

instead, the community would simply take something approaching the total annual economic rent of land for public purposes. This amount would be determined by the value of each site on the free market, not by any arbitrary governmental fiat. In other words, the privilege of monopolizing a site is a benefit received from society and for which society should be fully compensated; and so, under the George system, the person who wished to monopolize a site would pay a rent for it to the community, approaching 100 percent of its annual rental value, exclusive of improvements.

Let me emphasize that last phrase, "exclusive of improvements." The apartment-house owner would pay the full value of his lot, and nothing on his building; the factory-owner would pay the full value of his site, and nothing on his factory; the farmer would pay the full value of his ground, and nothing on his buildings or his crop, his livestock or his machinery; the homeowner would pay the full value of his lot, and nothing on his house.

This would, of course, eliminate all speculative profit in land-holding, depress land prices, and in effect bring back the frontier by making cheap land readily available to everyone. This would raise the margin of production, increase real wages, and stimulate building and productivity. At the same time, all other taxes would be abolished. The land-value tax is really what Walt Rybeck calls a "super user's fee." For the privilege of exclusive access to and disposition of a site and its natural resources, the owner pays an indemnity to those who are thereby dispossessed - an indemnity reflecting precisely the market value of his privilege, collected through the tax mechanism and relieving them of the burden of payment for public services. What could be more fair?

Actually, I daresay that each one of you, probably without realizing it, frequently pays something that partakes of the principle of such a "super user's fee" whether you own land or not. Every time that you put money in a parking meter, you are purchasing a temporary monopoly of the parking space. Don't ever complain about having to put money in public parking meters; it's a bargain for you. You're getting a free gift from the community - the difference between what you pay and what a commercial parking lot in the vicinity would charge!

If time were not limited, I could talk at length about specific advantages of the Georgist system. I could go into the canons of taxation, and show how site-value taxation fulfills better than any other method the ideal criteria whereby economists measure the effectiveness of a system of public revenue. I could give concrete illustrations of how it is working right now in Denmark, in New Zealand, in Australia, in Taiwan, and even in some areas here in the United States.

This is not the idle pipe-dream of an armchair visionary. It has been tested by experience. Let me just cite the Hutchinson Report, a survey comparing the various Australian states in terms of the degree to which they use the Henry George approach. It found that wages, purchasing power, growth of industry, volume of retail sales, land under cultivation, value of improvements, and population gain through immigration from other states, were in every case greater in direct proportion of revenues derived from the public collection of ground rent. To me, this is the most conclusive argument anyone could ask for!

Of course, Henry George's proposal has nowhere been fully implemented. Even where it has been implemented to a substantial degree, its beneficial impact has invariably been blunted by countervailing policies, oftentimes at other levels of government. It is not a panacea. To be completely effective, it would need to be supplemented by other reforms, such as measures to assure a stable currency. But of it this much can be said: All other systems have been found wanting. This alone has worked wherever it has been tried to the extent that it has been tried. I submit that it is now deserving of actualization on a wider and more thorough-going scale.

Nobody, to my knowledge, advocates that it be instituted whole-hog overnight. But it could be phased in in easy stages so as to obviate the risk of shock and dislocation. And it is my considered opinion that, by the time the system were in full effect, the revenues produced by collecting land values alone would suffice to meet all legitimate public needs. This may not have been true during the Cold War, with its staggering burden of nuclear defense. But with this burden lifted, and with the need for welfare of all kinds evaporated because of the full employment and other social benefits that the system would naturally engender, and for other reasons which time precludes my going into here, I really think that we could dispense with taxes on incomes, improvements, sales, imports, and all the rest. If I am unduly optimistic in this belief, and the public appropriation of site-values were insufficient, this would be no argument against using it as far as it could go.

There are two things which a government can never do and still be just: The first of these is to take for public purposes what rightfully belongs to private individuals. the second is to give to private individuals what rightfully belongs to the public. All wealth which is privately produced rightfully belongs to private individuals, and for the government to appropriate it is unjust. But ground rent is publicly produced, and for the government to give it to private individuals is equally unjust. He who thinks himself prepared to justify in principle the private monopolization of ground rent, must also be prepared to justify in principle the jobbery of the Tweed Ring and the scandals of Teapot Dome.

In closing, I will summarize with a quotation from the late Dr. Viggo Starke, for many years a member of the Danish cabinet:

> What I produce is mine. All mine! What you produce is yours. All yours! But that which none of us produced, but which we all lend value to together, belongs by right to all of us in common.

This, in a nutshell, is the philosophy of Henry George.

- Dr. Robert V. Andelson

The above is an address delivered to American Institute for Economic Research Fellows, staff, and invited guests on July 9, 1992. Dr. Andelson is Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, Auburn University. He is the author and/or editor of a number of works that deal with the teachings of Henry George, including From Wasteland to Promised Land: Liberation Theology for a Post Marxist World, Commons Without Tragedy, *and* Critics of

Henry George; A Centenary Appraisal of Their Strictures on *Progress and Poverty*.

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GREEN REVOLUTION
published quarterly by the
School of Living

Editors: Ginny Green and Thomas Greco

The School of Living, founded in 1934 by Ralph Borsodi, is dedicated to learning and teaching personal responsibility and right-living. It aims to foster self-governing communities which are democratic, humane, globally conscious and ecologically sound. All of its resources, especially the land it holds in trust, are held in responsible stewardship for all living creatures. The editors welcome your comments and suggestions.

Membership in the School of Living is $20 annually and includes a subscription to *Green Revolution*. Please send all correspondence to the SoL business office: School of Living RD 1, Box 185A, Cochranville, PA 19330. Tel. (215) 593-6988.

June 7, 1992, Rio de Janeiro, GLOBAL FORUM:

THE FEMALE PLANET

by Eve Ilsen, M.A.

The most remarkable range of activities is being carried out in the women's tent, the one called The Female Planet, throughout the Global Forum. Today's theme is Women and the Sacred. A panel on Ethics and Accountability, featuring Shirley Maclaine as one of the guests, took place this morning. This afternoon, fourteen smaller seminars have taken place simultaneously, with topics as widespread as Mysticism and Politics!, Ethics and Reproduction,The Spirituality of Peasant Women.

I am delighted that we began the afternoon session with movement, which wakened us, loosened us, and brought us fully present. I am one of four women who have been invited to wander among the various groups. Our task was to observe, and at the end of the afternoon to summarize. speaking from the point of view of our various traditions: Protestant, Catholic, Afro-Brazilian and Jewish. A kind volunteer accompanied me, translating from the Portuguese. She also participated as one of the three women who valiantly translated my speech into Portuguese.

What follows is that speech. as best as I can recall it.

We are none of us here by accident: we are here because we have been called to be here. I had been under the illusion that people had originated this convocation, in an attempt to help our planet survive. But it seems to me now that it is Earth herself, a great living organism, who has brought us here in order to open our hearts, connect us with one another and perhaps whisper to us some answers. This connecting of people is essential. Since our communication systems link us all over the globe. we have become like the nervous system of the planet. Unfortunately, our species has developed much more rapidly mentally and technologically than we have emotionally and spiritually, and we now have the power to cause great damage to all life on our planet. Elizabeth Satouris, who writes on cosmology and ecology, is still rather optimistic about the survival of the Earth; but she affirms that if we do not become much wiser, we may not survive: our species may become extinct, like others we have helped destroy.

Each group I visited (and I fell in love with each one, reluctant to leave) was vitally concerned with central questions: how do we engage in a religious or spiritual practice that connects us to this very world and gives us nourishment and guidance? what is it to be a human being; what is it to be female; what is our true nature; how do we recover our power and effectiveness as the nurturers of life on our planet: the lives of our loved ones, our own lives as women, without having to turn ourselves into men in order to command power? Our common urgency as life-nurturers transcends differences of age, nationality, race, religion and wealth.

When I have asked groups of women of my own tradition, when we have been alone and unobserved, what have been their real experiences of the sacred, they seem rarely to have taken place in the synagogue or during formal prayer. They were almost always body-based: while making love to a beloved, while giving birth, nursing a child in the middle of the night, attending a death, preparing food for family, dancing, watching birds, flowers, sunsets. It is no accident that the planet is rousing the power of the feminine now, in its need. This is a very different picture from the view of spirituality

Eve Ilsen, lover of the earth, magical spell-weaver and wise woman extraordinaire some of us inherited: the sharp polarization of spirit and matter. This developed with good reason in its time, because we are not creatures only of the earth. But we all suffer now from the imbalances of this view unmodified. The mystics of our tradition have asked the question: why does the soul descend [into matter]? And they answer: it is a descent for the sake of ascent. To me, this means that we do not ascend alone, but we lift matter with us into consciousness. So our lives as human beings are not a trial and a punishment, as some would have; nor even a "school", which can sound grim. but rather, it is a great joy and a privilege.

In the Jewish tradition, our spiritual life is immediately and intimately linked with *tikkun olam*, the repair of the world. It is seen as our job to create justice, to engage in acts of kindness, to fix and complete what is not yet right in God's creation. This means that not only do we need God — but also that God needs us.

The only prayer which we are commanded to say, in the Torah, besides the declaration when bringing the first fruits, is the *Sh'ma:* the declaration of the unity of God. Clearly, this is no longer understood, as it once may have been in our immature past, as meaning that our representation of god is the only legitimate one, and all the others are worthless. When people claim that they don't believe in god, it is usually *that* one that they don't believe in. Of course not: that god is too small. We know so much now about the resonating complexity of the interconnectedness of everything, and have glimpses of infinities nested within infinities: it augments awe of what this

Great Unity must be, in which we have our existence. It more closely approaches another statement of our mystics: "there is no place empty of Him."

Then the prayer continues: "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul (breath, aspiration), and with all your might (muchness, vitality)—and it later goes on to say that if we base our lives and our thoughts and all our behavior on this love, then the rain will come in its season, the earth will yield its abundance at the right time. But if we become deluded and serve lesser things, we will "perish quickly from off the good earth" which we were given. We are now beginning to feel, all too clearly, what our Torah spelled out in detail thousands of years ago: that our interaction with the environment, and the environment's interaction with us, is a direct consequence of the nature of our living connection with the Sacred. When every aspect of our live, springs from the knowledge and the love of that Unity, our behaviors and their consequences serve life.

The essential goal and purpose of all sacred traditions, mystical disciplines and private spiritual practices has been to evoke the EXPERIENCE of our own true nature, the nature of reality of all the worlds, and our place, as individual souls and as a species in the Whole. The many ethical precepts of our tradition give us guidelines by which to live as if we had already had such experience. They refine and shape us as we continue to grow.

It is an honor and an inspiration to be among you. We are a large group of women, representing great diversity, who have dedicated ourselves to the fostering of Life, in its wonder and complexity, and to the personal responsibility of answering the Call of the Sacred.

Workshops examining the relationship between Woman and the Sacred, organized by *Projectos Sophia & Espirito da Coisa*, and ISER Institute for Study of Religion:

1) *Relationship Between Ethics and the Sacred*
2) *Emergence of New Values: Ethics and Reproduction*
3) *Mysticism of Indigenous Women*
4) *Ecology of Liberation*
5) *Peasant Women and Spirituality*
6) *Mysticism and Politics*
7) *Feminine Orixas (Afro-Brazilian tradition)*
8) *Lilith and Eve*
9) *Feminine Archetypes in Esoteric Sciences*
10) *Images of Women in the Holy Texts*
11) *Spirituality and Healing*
12) *Sex and Color of God*
13) *The Body as an Expression of the Sacred*
14) *Black dolls Workshop*
15) *Clay Workshop*

Eve Ilsen, M. A., a therapist whose focus is with dynamic movement and transformational imagery, often works with women on relational and spiritual issues specific to our gender, and additionally, offers workshops in conjunction with her partner Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi on a variety of spiritual and ecological issues including their wonderful Wisdom School.

Eve trained with Colette Aboulker-Muscat in Jerusalem, and worked with Joseph Campbell at Sarah Lawrence College.

PRAYER FOR THE EARTH
from Wainwright House

When we are children, the world cares for us. As adults we must care for the world. Nurturing this world we live in, we build the foundation for the creative hopes of our individual lives. Today our world is in distress. If we do not lovingly hear its call we will surely suffer. Yet we cannot heal what is outside us without healing ourselves, and the pain we see around us mirrors the pain we hold within. Let us pause listen clearly to the rhythm of our lives and build our inner space. Let us pause then test our growth through intimacy, listening, loving and bowing to the gentle discipline of the larger whole. Seeing the power and truth of our interdependence, let us reject the vulnerability and falsehood of self-willed isolation by rebuilding community at home and abroad. Finally, let us curb our infinite indifference toward our Mother Earth, and rest gratefully in her generous arms.

Wainwright House, founded in 1941 by the Laymen's Movement, a group of distinguished business leaders, for the purpose of bringing ethical and spiritual values into professional and personal lives, is a learning center dedicated to awakening consciousness in spirit, mind, body and community. It provides seminars, conferences, and ongoing courses in spirituality, psychology, personal growth, health, the arts, global issues and business leadership. Its mission is to act as a bridge to develop and maintain dialogue between new frontiers of thought and the traditional religious, scientific, professional, educational and business establishments.

STUDENT WRITINGS:
ONE BY MEIGHAN CARIVAN:

My name is Meighan Carivan. I am a high school student with an unusual educational background. In visiting Hofstra's New College, I have found many of the same qualities I have enjoyed through out my educational history and I thought it would be good to explain more about what I have done.

I live in a community formed around an alternative school in Albany, New York, called The Free School. I attended The Free School for many of my grade school years. The kind of work we did depended a lot upon what we were interested in learning. Although we were split up into classes, we often were involved with kids of different age groups. I usually had one project or another going on and I seldom spent time at my desk. I also did outside activities such as taking class trips across country.

I enjoyed The Free School a lot but I had to leave, because it only has classes up to eighth grade. I spent ninth grade in Albany High School, which didn't work out too well. It was difficult to adjust to such a large place. Many of the kids were unfriendly, many of the teachers didn't seem to care about what they were doing, and after being active most of the time, sitting at a desk all day made me feel like I was doing nothing.

I felt I needed a change, but I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. Then my mother suggested I talk to the woman in my community who had started The Free School, Mary Leue. Mary began The Free School by home schooling her children so I asked her to home school me. She agreed, and with her I studied biology, history and English. I used regular tenth grade textbooks, read them at home, and then went to see Mary twice a week to discuss what I had read. I learned a lot and really enjoyed going to see her. My stepfather, Paul Merle, tutored me in math, and our classes worked basically the same way.

On the days I didn't have classes, I worked at two jobs. I had an internship at The Free School two days a week where I worked with preschool age children. I also had a job at another community business called North River Boatworks. I worked there once a week doing bookkeeping. I mostly worked with a computer, but I also did other jobs like sending out brochures and running errands. I'd never done anything like it before and I had the chance to learn while getting paid, which was nice. Having these jobs made a big difference to my home study because it made me active and gave me interaction with other people on a regular basis. I formed closer relationships with a lot of the people in my community and I had the opportunity of working outside the classroom.

The one thing I missed with home schooling was interaction with kids my own age. Because of this, I decided not to home school a second year.

I decided the best thing to do would be to look for an alternative high school to go to. In traveling with The Free School, I had visited and heard about many other alternative schools, some even with communities like mine. One of these places was The Farm School in Summertown, Tennessee. I visited there again over the summer and stayed with some people I knew. It felt like what I was looking for so I decided to spend my next year there.

Moving from my community in urban New York to The Farm community in rural Tennessee was quite a change. The southern culture itself was different, but also the way in which The Farm was a community was different. For instance, my community, being in the city, doesn't own the land we live on, whereas The Farm owns over 1,000 acres of land on which everyone lives.

The Farm School was also very different from The Free School. It had more of a mixture of the structure of public school,with the atmosphere and freedom of alternative school. I got grades, took tests, and, structure-wise, had a regular school day. What was different was the overall attitude. There weren't kids beating each other up in the halls, and I wasn't judged for what I wore to school. I was encouraged to explore in what ways I found it easiest to learn. Two of the main things I learned from this experience were that there are things about public school that are valuable and that it is possible to incorporate both kinds of education, public and alternative, into a system that works.

I had planned to finish high school on The Farm, but when I returned in September from summer vacation, some things had changed. The Farm School is going through some changes that unfortunately were having a negative effect on my presence there and on my education. After spending a month of my senior year there, I felt it was time to go.

I returned to Albany, set up home study, and planned to get my G.E.D. in the spring. I wasn't at all sure of what I wanted beyond that, but a few months ago, that changed.

My sister, Elizabeth Carivan, is a freshman attending Hofstra and I visited her there a few days after Thanksgiving. Having had a background in alternative education, I was curious about Hofstra's New College. I decided to make sure to visit The New College while I was there, and I'm glad I did. One of the students gave me a tour and I spoke with one of the history professors. I learned about how it's run, what it offers,and what would be expected of me. There were many things about The New School that I could relate to, such as their sense of community, their smaller size,and the uniqueness of just trying something different.

My main inhibition about going to college was whether or not I could find a place that would respect and enhance my point of view. I didn't want to run off to any old college and end up not being able to share the most rare and valuable skill I have. I left The New School feeling like I had found the perfect place, a place where I could give as much as I receive.

Since it was impossible to get G.E.D. scores fast enough to be able to apply to Hofstra for the fall semester, I have returned to Albany High School to get my diploma. I hope you will accept my application, and allow me to enter into your school.

Several of Meighan's poems have also appeared in ΣΚΟΛΕ.

TWO BY KATY LEUE:

MY GRANDMOTHER

My grandmother, Mary Leue, never spoiled me or showered me with presents. She never pinched my cheeks or said, "My, how you've grown!" Instead, she talked to me like an adult. I don't mean that we discussed sophisticated subjects such as politics or economics when I was ten years old. We played games together and talked about children's books. However, she wasn't patronizing towards me. She treated me like an intelligent human being and so I tried to act like one.

Grammy taught me how to interact with and relate to adults. She founded an elementary school in Albany, New York called The Free School which is still in existence. She has invested a great deal of her life in helping and teaching children in an enjoyable and respectful way. She uses her experience from working at the school when she spends time with her grandchildren.

The summer after I finished third grade I stayed with my father, who also lives in Albany, New York, for a month, so I had a great deal of time to visit with my grandmother. Our favorite activity was playing a computer game called Zork. The goal of the game is to collect various treasures around the land of Zork by typing commands like "go north" into the computer to move and by drawing maps using detailed descriptions of different locations in the area. Both Grammy and I gained a lot from playing this game because it was not geared exclusively toward children or adults. We created the maps together and helped each other decipher the puzzles. I never felt like an extra or an assistant to her. She accepted my ideas and encouraged my creativity on an equal level.

I also have a chance to spend time with my grandmother during Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday gatherings. She has always rejected the idea of seating children at a separate dinner table from the adults. Also, Grammy started a family tradition of sitting and singing in a large circle after the meal while my uncles accompany us with the guitar. Before the children go to bed, we share in an activity that all generations can enjoy and participate in. She is very conscious not to exclude her grandchildren from the celebration. During these family reunions she made me feel visible and important.

Grammy was there to teach me that children are essential members of society and should not be ignored. When we spent time together we shared activities that both of us enjoyed and benefitted from. I value the saying, "respect your elders" and my grandmother showed me that respect can be mutual.

THE INFLUENCES OF MY COMMUNITY

Amherst, Massachusetts is a very liberal and politically aware community. Both the University of Massachusetts and Amherst College are located in the center of the town so youth and energy channel through constantly. My values and beliefs about race, sexual preference, and family have been shaped by my community. Every day I am surrounded by all different types of people and I have learned to accept and appreciate those differences.

Although Amherst is a relatively small New England town, there exists every imaginable family situation. I have never had a clear vision of the traditional, nuclear family nor the belief that it was the best or most correct family. My own parents divorced when I was two and a half years old. I never felt awkward about not living with my father because many of my friends lived with one parent or with step-parents as well. Amherst swallowed me into its stomach of eclectic cuisine. My family was included in the basic four food groups, an essential nutrient, not an abnormality.

Amherst has made me feel comfortable with my differences, and I think many people in the community feel the same. My perception of homosexuality has been shaped by the way my town deals with the issue. Posters hang on bus stop shelters and bulletin boards in popular restaurants advertising gay and lesbian meetings and seminars. One of my close childhood friends had two mothers. Homosexuality did not seem hidden to me, so I had no reason to shut my eyes or deny it. Because of the honest way the issue was brought out into the open, I never thought it was strange or something to be afraid of. It is just another way of life.

My values about family and sexual preference are not the only beliefs that my community has influenced. My high school prides itself on educating students from over thirty different ethnic backgrounds. Walking down the hallways of the high school during diversity week I can smell traditional

Vietnamese food cooking in one room while South American dancing instruction is given in the next. There are many courses given at the high school to educate us about different races, such as, "Minorities in America", "African-American Literature" and "Asian History".

Although Amherst is a diverse and aware town, it is not a perfect place. We do not live in a "world without collisions" as Athol Fugard pointed out in the play, "Master Harold and the Boys." There is still racism and prejudice against homosexuals apparent in the society. However, when prejudice or racial incidents occur, they are not simply dismissed and forgotten. Three years ago there was a fight between two boys, one black and one white, at the annual town fair on the common, during which punches and racial slurs were exchanged. The next day, assemblies were held at both the junior and senior public schools so people could voice their feelings about the incident. Tension grew continuously stronger until over one thousand students walked into the center of the town hand-in-hand, and continued discussions about racial equality in a large circle around the same common where the fight had taken place. I marched that day to show my community what I had learned from being a member of it. I know these problems cannot go unaddressed.

The atmosphere of Amherst, Massachusetts, is free and open. Issues are welcomed out in the community and are dealt with openly and seriously. I have absorbed its liberal ideals and accepting nature. Amherst embraced me even though I didn't live with two parents and a dog. I learned the importance of

appreciating everyone regardless of race or sexual preference. I have been influenced by a community which does not avoid issues, but strives for change, qualities which describe my future.

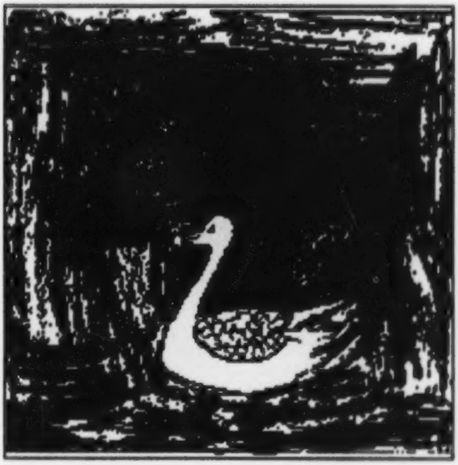
Katy Leue, my oldest grandchild, lives with her mother and step-father in Amherst, MA -- a non-standard community, as she tells us, which has clearly served as a school for seventeen-year-old Katy, who is on her way to college in the fall.

I hope that readers of ΣΚΟΛΕ who may sometimes begin to feel restive at the frequency of contributions to the journal from members of the family and/or school-community of the editor will try to keep in mind the essential relevance to educational alternatives of such contributions rather than focus on the possible ego of the editor! Sure, I'm proud of having such family and community members, but their qualities of integrity and open-mindedness are what bring them into the journal as contributors, not their tribal belonging! Their contributions to excellence are their own doing, not mine! Q.E.D.

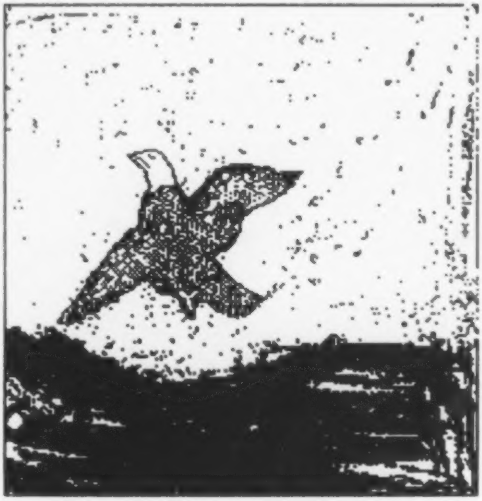
A STORY:

THE MALLARD

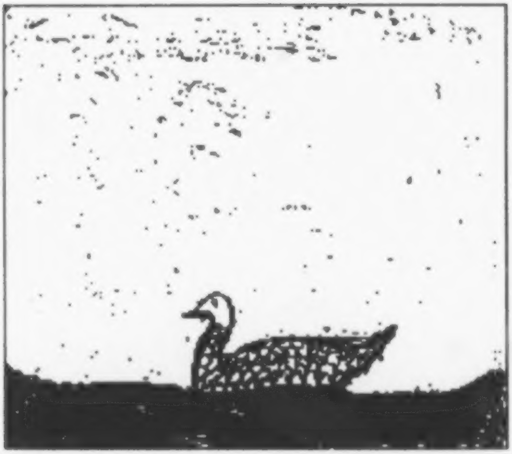
by Ian Leue



Once upon a time there was a mallard that lived in a chicken coop. Every night a raccoon came out.



One night the mallard was out. The raccoon turned its head. The mallard turned its head. The mallard ran and ran.



and flew onto a perch. The next day the mallard was fine. That night the mallard was out again.

The raccoon was out too. The same things happened except this time there was no tree and the mallard ended up swiming down a river. The raccoon couldn't swim. The mallard was safe. The raccoon gave up.

the end

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ian is 7 years old. He is in first grade, and he loves to

read!

Note: I have attempted to replicate the original format of this piece with as much authenticity as possible, including the vita above!

REVIEW:

Holistic Education Review, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring, 1988, to Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter, 1992. Holistic Education Press, 39 Pearl St., Brandon, VT 05733.

Reviewer, Chris Mercogliano

Founded in 1988 by Ron Miller, the *Holistic Education Review* steadily continues to pursue its mission:

> "... to stimulate discussion and application of all person-centered educational ideas and methods (and to) explore how education can encourage the fullest possible development of human potentials and planetary consciousness, (believing) that human fulfillment, global cooperation and ecological responsibility should be the primary goals of education.

Originally self-published by Miller, *Holistic Education Review* has handsomely survived its recent changes of both editor and publisher, and is now being kept on course by new editor Jeff Kane, Ph. D., Dean of the School of Education at Adelphi University, and new publisher Charles Jakiela of Holistic Education Press, who also published Ron's excellent new book, *What Are Schools For? Holistic Education in American Culture.*

The titles of early issues of the *Review* reflect a content which is consonant with the above mission statement found on the title page of each issue: "Education for the Whole Person and a Healthy Planet," "What Makes Alternative Schools Alternative?," "Peace Education - for All the Earth's Children," "Empowering Teachers," "Spiritual Growth Through Education," and "Honoring Cultural Pluralism in Education" are themes explored in early issues, building on Ron Miller's and then co-editor, Mary E. Sweeney, Ph. D.'s opening editorial statements (Vol. 1 No. 1). According to Ron Miller,

> The holistic approach is the middle path between religious fundamentalism and secular humanism... (and) it is essentially an ecological approach. Holistic education challenges the materialistic, mechanical, intellectual world view of the industrial age, for as long as we treat the earth as a resource to be exploited and controlled, so we will treat our children... We need instead to awaken a reverence for life, and for its mysterious emergence in the soul of every child.

To which Mary Sweeney adds in her opening statement,

> Please join us in our dialogue to advocate radical, widespread, and structural educational changes and promote self-actualization of the highest moral level for the children we proclaim to love."

A great deal of space in early issues is devoted to attempting to define just what is meant by "holistic education," and a perusal of the table of contents of those issues reveals that this new paradigm or movement, if that's what it is, is to be comprised of a coalition of contributors from very diverse backgrounds and points of view. The first issue alone contains articles by Waldorf educators, Humanistic educators, Homeschooling movement leaders, a well-known '60's "Free School" founder, a "New Age" theorist, and a more mainstream career teacher educator. Also to be found there is Ron Miller's well-researched and thought-out version of the history of "holistic education" from Rousseau to John Holt himself.

In his editorial in the second issue (Summer '88), Miller broadens and deepens his vision of "holistic education:"

> Thus, it is more than just a new method or a packet of curriculum materials; it is a deeply moral and yes, a

> *political* position. To hold reverence for the unfolding life of the individual person is a statement of value and hence of priorities: it is saying that the intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the growing child deserve a greater share of adult attention and social resources than they are currently being given.
>
> ...When we begin to value our children as precious bearers of divine gifts, then we will treat each of them with respect and honor, and love - and provide for them a culture and a community that nurtures the growth of their highest and best potentials. This is the politics of empowerment.

Later, in the Fall/91 issue, Ron Miller in an article entitled, "Holism and Meaning," addresses the nature of the difficulties which inevitably accompany the invention of any new "ism." In the absence of any "coherent holistic theory," according to Miller, casually tossed-around buzz words like "spirituality," "consciousness," "global awareness," and "paradigm" make "holistic education" an easy target, encouraging critics to dismiss it as just another form of new age romanticism. To quote Ron,

> The holistic vision, if it is to make an impact on the present culture, needs to be clarified and translated into language accessible to other intellectual and social movements... The fundamental task is to take insights that are essentially mystical and articulate them in languages that speak to the condition of our present culture...
>
> Holism must not adopt an aloof, missionary attitude towards other perspectives as it has often done, but must begin to engage in genuine dialogue with them.

Holistic Education Review, under its new editor, Jeff Kane, continues to wrestle along that fine line between genuine, dialectical experimentation with an emerging (or re-emerging) paradigm and the parochial self-stimulation that so many professional journals fall into sooner or later. Recent evidence of this struggle can be found in the "Book Reviews and Letters" sections (so often a publication's juiciest features) of the last three issues of the *Review* (Vol. 5, Nos. 2, 3, 4), where an ongoing and hot dialogue/debate/verbal fist fight between several current radical education thinkers is taking place. Ron Miller throws down the gauntlet in his critical review (Summer/92) of John Taylor Gatto's recent book condemning government-controlled compulsory education entitled, *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling.*

After initially praising Gatto's radical critique of standardized American education and mass-culture, Miller warns:

> Nevertheless, there is a fundamental issue at stake here, which could end up sharply dividing the holistic education movement if we do not sensitively address it. Gatto, like John Holt and a great many homeschoolers, holds and defends a *libertarian* social philosophy; in the John Locke/Adam Smith tradition, Gatto argues that a common social good arises only out of the free interaction of individuals and intimate communities pursuing their own local good. Individuals and families are seen as the primary social reality, while social forces are generally treated as a distressing nuisance."

Miller, openly declaring his opposition to what he perceives to be John Gatto's "libertarian" orientation, calls for a broad-based social movement to actively address the planetary crisis we now find ourselves confronted with, rather than waiting for change to work itself out on a more localized, individualized basis. He urges our society to incorporate personal and local independence into policies that recognize our interdependence. While Miller agrees with Gatto's rejection of compulsory schooling, he severely questions whether the "free market" will ever provide decent educational options for lower class children. According to Miller,

> These are problems of a social dimension, not solely a personal one. Getting rid of compulsory regimentation in schools is an important part of our task, but by no means is it a panacea that will restore our society to some golden age of free people and whole families. A holistic response - not an atomistic one - is required.

Miller ends his provocative review of an equally provocative book with a question to which he, as yet, has not arrived at his own answer: can government-run schools ever be expected to embrace a pedagogy radical enough to truly challenge the status-quo? He ends with a healthy call for dialogue, or dialectic, to borrow Gatto's term (which he borrowed from Hegel), between libertarians and holistic activists (Miller's description of the polarity).

Currently, the *Review* has a lively and certainly dialectical exchange on its hands. Pat Farenga, President of Holt Associates, Inc., and one of the principal keepers of the legacy of John Holt, passionately responds in the next issue (Fall/92) to what he believes to be Ron Miller's assertion in his review of *Dumbing Us Down* that homeschoolers are not sufficiently socially conscious. He appears to find himself suddenly thrust (by Miller and Gatto) somewhere in the middle of the age-old question of whether or not radical institutional/educational reform is indeed possible. Declares Farenga,

> I respect anyone's decision to try and make schools nurturing communities; I only wish homeschoolers would get the same respect for their decision to make

> nurturing communities without schools. I keep hoping that apologists for the schools who, like Miller, seek to change them into more humane places will stop viewing homeschoolers, many of whom tried unsuccessfully to change schools themselves or who still teach in schools, as obstacles, but as allies working on a different front of social and educational change.

Farenga's call for unity, as it serendipitously occurs between the issues of the *Review* where Miller and Gatto square off, is more than timely. The current crisis, whether or not one chooses to limit its scope to our educational system, is immense and growing exponentially. (I recently met with the head of the Albany, N.Y. School District's department which addresses children's special needs, and he informed me that nearly 15% of the local student population now fall within that category, with the number increasing daily, and his people are absolutely overwhelmed. He also told me that the severity of the nature of the needs is increasing as well. And Albany is a small city of under 100,000 people, where one ordinarily expects problems to remain on a manageable scale. The alarming reality is that this is no longer true in our school system.)

No one individual, or social movement, has a monopoly on the truth. The truth is that we each tend to hold a piece of the truth, and that it takes a diversity of approaches to solve any complex social problem. Firesign Theater taught us that, "We're all bozos on this bus," and it is critical, at this juncture, for all of the strong voices in the cry for a new direction in American education to resist the temptations of territoriality, professional jealousy and intellectual one-upsmanship. United we stand, divided we fall.

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Readers can find John Gatto's fiery and thoughtful response to Ron Miller's review of his book in the back of the latest issue (Winter, 92) of *Holistic Education Review.* Gatto strenuously objects to being labelled a libertarian (as well as stating his objection to all labels, including "holistic") by Miller, and rejects his assertion that he (Gatto) expects Adam Smith's (the "father" of free market capitalism) "invisible hand" to magically intervene and erase problems that have been hundreds of years in the making. For instance, with regard to the issue of educational opportunity for lower class children, Gatto believes that the "market" in and of itself is neutral, and only serves as the playing field upon which potential strategies for change can be worked out. On the other hand, government, or macro-reform movement action, he says, is never neutral, and always results in the imposition of, "one or another religious view of the good life on everybody."

At this point, John issues a counter-warning of his own, which is that whenever any cause claims for itself, "the sweeping power of compelling mass behavior," the inevitable result is a "holy war" scenario in which society merely exchanges one master for another. Gatto says that he understands the activist's intense desire to contribute to and witness substantial change in his or her own lifetime, but further cautions that so many consciously contrived short-term programs for change, no matter how well-meaning, end up doing more harm than good. In his own inimitable style, Gatto writes:

> People who mind other people's business are always bad news. It's the movers and the shakers... the

> Pasteurs, the Copernicuses, the Columbus's, the Newtons, the Horace Manns... - each of these men (and of course they are all men, mostly childless men) short circuits the human dialectic, arrogating to themselves a false and morally corrosive authority that creates the dependent human mass that it then "illuminates."

Gatto then concludes with a nutshell summation of his own position on school reform:

> Deconstruct these synthetic institutions, the machinery is a constant temptation to the worst people on this planet to scheme for its control. As I read history, they always win in the long run. But ah, if we broke the machinery...?"

Turning from this thought-provoking Miller/Gatto debate on the likelihood or methodology of educational reform or restructuring, a substantial field of agreement can be found between these two scholar/change agents. To quote Gatto from the beginning of his long letter to the *Review*,

> In this assertion Ron makes - that I believe individuals and families are the primary human reality - he is only a bit better than half right. The largest omission is the importance of nature and location. I regard the fabric of the natural world, *unaltered*, as a central part of sanity. Not a minor part, not a dismissable part, not an exchangeable part, not an amenity, but one of the few primary *essences*... However, if Ron had said individuals and families and rocks/trees/water/ air/places are the primary human reality, he'd have been nearly right. If he'd had added our mortality and relation to the mystery we call God, completely right.

To regular readers of *Holistic Education Review*, this credo would sound wonderfully familiar. Perhaps, John Gatto gets so passionate in explaining how he thinks Ron Miller has des cartes before des horses, that he fails to see the deep philosophical and spiritual commonality between the two men (neither of whom is childless!). And vice-versa, I would add.

In any case, this exchange alone makes the recent issues of the *Review* must-reading; - and then there are the dozens of other articles that are also well worth examining. In the Fall '92 issue entitled, "Explorations in Holistic Science and Science Education," there are several largely theoretical pieces which debunk some of the current myths of science education and which examine emerging "holistic" paradigms in both Renaissance (Goethe) and modern science itself as well as new possibilities in current and future science education.

In addition, there are excellent articles describing the practice of "holistic" principles in this area: one telling about an outdoor school for children of the rural and inner-city poor in the Portland, Oregon, region, one about an American version of the Japanese-inspired "hoikuen," or small, family-like nursery school which meets in the teacher/director's home, and one by an elementary science classroom teacher from Greenfield, Massachusetts.

The Winter '92 Issue is entitled, "Educational Assessment," and contains articles which describe a variety of attempts by practicing teachers and educational theorists to apply "holistic" principles to this prickly issue. Jeff Kane, in his challenging editorial, traces the roots of modern student assessment instruments back to the industrial and military contexts where they were first developed. He states, quite rightly, that the function of mass forms of assessment is to centralize power; and that currently, how we assess children in school both determines how knowledge itself is defined there and absolutely governs the day-to-day life of every classroom in the nation. A number of interesting alternatives are put forth by contributors to this latest issue of the *Review*.

A final rapid flip-through of the entire set of twenty back issues reveals, on the one hand, that the *Review* has been able to maintain both a consistent focus and a high level of quality, and on the other hand a slow and subtle drift toward an academic flavor and orientation can be noted. In any event, *Holistic Education Review* provides a valuable and necessary forum for the exchange of ideas relating to the true education of our children.

And here follows the full text of John Gatto's reply to Ron Miller, referred to in Chris' review of HER above. Ron's review of John's book, Dumbing Us Down, *appeared in the Winter issue of ΣΚΟΛΕ.*

Dear Editor:

I thank Ron Miller for the generous words of praise in the review of my book *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling* and at the same time am sending along some brief comments, in the spirit of the dialectic, about the "fundamental issue" (Ron's characterization) he finds at stake in my perspective.

To begin, some amendments are necessary. Ron says I hold and defend a libertarian social philosophy. While I have an approximate idea what he means by that, I live in horror of any labels (including, to be frank, "holistic") that box people in. My own observation of reality is that classification systems should not be taken seriously—they interfere with clear thought and virtually prevent discovery when they go beyond casual convenience. Having said that, let me classify myself more accurately than Ron did: The social philosophy I hold is a hybrid of Scotch-Irish folkways, Italian *Presbyterian* iconoclasm, some aristocratic seasoning (we were Lords of the Straits of Messina in the 13th century), a certain amount of classical training, a year spent with the Jesuits, a spell as altar boy for a wonderful priest who drank sacramental wine and played baseball (the Catholic strain through my Irish/German grandmother), and three decades of constant experimentation as a junior high teacher of both the near-rich and the dirt poor. Those are the external influences of substance, internally I've tried to push beyond the conditioned circuitry to discover the perimeter of my own singularity. Still finding things out at 57. Calling me a libertarian would eventually mislead you. On the other hand I *like* most libertarians I know of (Robert Ringer being one exception, Ayn Rand another), but I could say the same of most capital "C" conservatives, too.

In an understandable urge to establish the poles of dialectic, Ron accidentally sets me up as inhabiting a location I don't live in, and misstates some of my positions. I understand the realities of book reviewing and take no offense (in his position I would hardly have done as well) but in a contest of ideas it's crucial that all parties agree what ideas are actually being contested.

In his first assertion, that I argue common social good arises only out of free interaction of individuals and intimate communities he's about 95% accurate but the premise is an exceedingly complicated one requiring years of Jesuitical reflection to comes to terms with. I expect argument, of course, but in its nature it isn't a *debating* point but a tool designed to help people challenge their own assumptions. Challenge, that is, not necessarily discard. In the coda of this assertion Ron makes—that I believe individuals and families are the primary human reality—he is only a bit better than half right. The largest omission is the importance of nature and location. I regard the fabric of the natural world, *unaltered*, as a central part of sanity. Not a minor part, not a dismissable part, not an exchangeable part, not an amenity, but one of the few primary *essences*. In my codebook people without places are incompletely human, to move frequently is to display derangement. That accounts for the essay, "The Green Monongahela." It's in my book to demonstrate the role of place as a teacher. I am who I am because of Monongahela. If my place had been Erie I would not be who I am. I won't belabor what must seem to most "well-schooled" Americans an eccentricity, but most of human history including the best part honored this very conservative idea and lived it. The tale of Jews in history is inexplicable unless it is seen in some important part as the story of a people deprived of their place; the tale of America and its strangely Procrustean institutions is another story from the same genre.

However if Ron had said individual and families and rocks/trees/water/air/places are the primary human reality, he'd have been nearly right. If he'd have added our mortality and relation to the mystery we call God, completely right. But in his leap to a guess [that] I think something he calls "social forces" are a "distressing nuisance," he falls far short of where I really am. It's my turn now to guess, and if I guess correctly what he means by *social forces*, then "nuisance" doesn't begin to describe the distaste I feel. Substitute "horrifying psychopathology" and we'll be closer to the truth. People who mind other people's business, materially, in any arbitrary way are always bad news. It's the movers and shakers, I mean, the "great" names of history. It would be impossible for me, in a short compass, to explain adequately how damaging the Pasteurs, the Copernicuses, the Columbus's, the Newtons, the Horace Manns and all the rest of the Egyptian hierarchy has really been, but the mechanism is not hard to see—each of these men (and of course they are all men, mostly childless men) short circuits the human dialectic, arrogating to themselves a false and morally corrosive authority that *creates* the dependent human mass it then "illuminates." I would follow Paul Valery's M. le Teste in throwing the mass of prominent men in the ocean. The brilliant, and as yet largely unseen, American homeschooling movement is brilliant precisely because it is leaderless, lacking canonical texts, experts, and laws. At the moment true leadership emerges—which I pray will not happen—it will be co-opted, and the movement regimented, routinized, drained of its life.

I despair in the short time I have with you of explaining adequately these contentions but let me go at least a part of the distance: Short of preserving your immediate world the only justification possible, moral justification, that is, for interfering in someone else's life is that *you* know more than the other fellow does and are "intervening" (that's the "helping profession" jargon, isn't it?) "for his own good."

I reject that view in the overwhelming percentage of cases, believing with cause that the mathematical bell curve in human intelligence is a bald lie, albeit an exceedingly profitable one. What is good or bad is either a religious question or a philosophical one and not easily addressed—never by creating a demonology that relegates any individual into a *mass* than is managed for its own good. It might shed some light on that last conclusion by confessing I was deeply depressed by Jonathan Kozol's contention that money would improve the schools of the poor. It would *not*, any more than money has improved the schools of the middle class. What money has done is to dehu-

A strange image of Jonathan Kozol,
taken from a business publication on education,
I sort of liked it, though, especially the way he sits
on that rock in his business suit gazing into infinitude

manize *most* of the lives it touches, not least those in the sinecures of academia; nor could it be expected to do better in the hands of any other group than the present government gang. What Kozol accomplished is truly depressing—by transmuting his wonderful rage into a nasty, envious petulance, he has called attention away from his hardwon, and well-deserved, role as a biographer of human Justice. All synthetic mobilizations must similarly be exercises in pen and pencil abstraction, or cynical exercises in manipulation, or display a fatal gulf between fecund natural reality and the reductionism inherent in collectivizing it.

This is a subtle thing to consider: on one hand, the best way is hands off anything outside a local reach (the architects of "global community," who date back before Plato, are the single great manifestation of Evil in human affairs), but not minds-off. I think we have an absolute obligation to preach to each other, chide each other, praise and condemn each other, take hold of hands held out for help—in Vonnegut's words, if you are no use you must be useless. I believe that, I taught that, and as a toll for associating with my classes through much of my teaching career I demanded a full day's community service work each week. If kids freely chose to associate with me, the price of our association was community service (which I encouraged kids to self-design). I hope you can see the difference between this kind of compulsion and the kind that social engineers effect.

The immense danger which inevitably comes to pass when you set up social machinery compelling people to be "better" is that that machinery will be inherited by people whose "better" is your own "worse." Jefferson saw that in imploring our original legislators to give us a weak central government. Were it not for the unholy and largely unexamined close relationships between Germany (especially the synthetic state of Prussia) and the colonial and federal leadership classes, we might have followed Jefferson's prescription. Certainly it was the overwhelming choice of the common people here. But the curious company of Deists and Unitarians who pulled (pull?) the national strings were too enchanted with Adam Weishaupt's vision, and too intoxicated with victory and prosperity; too vicariously identified with the lessons of Frederick the Great, Prussian compulsion schools, research universities, and ultimately the deadly world view of Wilhelm Wundt to allow the nascent urges of freedom and democracy to develop. By 1850 both were stone cold dead. We have only a memory of our stillborn democracy.

There is no way to avoid the passage of effective social machinery into dirty hands; that is what history teaches to anyone with eyes. The only way to avoid this, the best defense, is to strike down ambitious organization before it grows (Cassius was right) or once grown, to combat it through relentless sabotage. That is what I did on a daily basis as a government schoolteacher, I broke the machine, I threw sand in the gears, I falsified papers, spread dissension among new recruits so subtly it was undetectable, broke laws regularly, destroyed records, undermined the confidence of the young in the institution and replaced it with confidence in self, in friends, in family, in neighborhood. I taught kids how to cheat their destiny so successfully that they created an astonishing record of successes; it is this latter course of silent warfare that much of our country's population has unconsciously chosen. It explains why few things work very well here, least of all schools. Nothing that John Gardner or Ted Sizer or (so far) Chris Whittle has done will change that need to sabotage the web that is strangling us. They ask the wrong questions and in any case would be unwilling to accept their own large contribution to the persistence of schooling problems. All sane solutions would eliminate them!

The only acceptable way to make people "better," your own children or strangers, is by your own personal living example to make a better way. The only curricular arrangements worth arranging are those that help an individual, not a class: (1) to know himself, (2) to love responsibility, (3) to feel obligation as a joy, (4) to need very little in a material sense, (5) to express love, (6) to love truth, (7) to hate tyranny, (8) to gain useful knowledge, (9) to be involved in loving families at work, (10) to be involved in communities at work, and (11) to be humble in the face of the great mysteries, and to keep them constantly in mind because only from that wellhead does the meaning of life flow.

As a schoolteacher/saboteur I was able to help poor kids come to see such things just as easily as I was able to help prosperous ones; with a modest income I was able to finance all my classroom enterprises without assistance from foundations, universities, the business community, or the school administration—and so could anyone else so disposed.

Now to turn to a charge Ron makes honestly, but upon examination dissolves into smoke:

> Gatto throws the baby out with the bathwater by categorically defining "school" as an impersonal network and virtually equating educators and activists with social engineers.

There's a lot of slipperiness here. Does "educator" mean schoolteacher? Do the activists Ron refers to have an agenda to eventually gain control of our compulsion-schools? If both guesses are correct, then he is right, I do believe they are social engineers of the worst stripe. But perhaps he means something different.

How in Heaven's name can "school," in any of the varieties of definition possible *for mass employment by a central government*, NOT be an impersonal network? Can you *school* anything "personally?" I know you can fake it, most "good" schools do, but I find the really dangerous places to be the ones that preempt the family role, pretending to be families instead of networks; that's the horrible lesson I try to read in the chapter "We Need Less School, Not More." We're all dying of networks. Networks are not families. Pseudo-family schools confuse the rising gorge of their student prisoners for a long time (although never permanently, the disguise wears through). If you find my "prisoner" to be infamous rhetoric, then you're going to have to explain to me the social logic that allows you to use the police power of the state to command children's presence and respect, to preempt their daylight hours, to prescribe what they will think about, to judge them constantly and rank them.

It makes no sense to me to drain children from a living community and confine them with strangers for all of their natural youth. No sense from a human community perspective, that is. It seems to make great sense, of course, to minds that wallow in dreams of human life as an anthill or a beehive, the great world society crowd. And of course, too, though we seldom talk about it because the prospect leaves us dumbfounded, it makes great sense to those still-free, if mean-spirited, minds who benefit substantially from the docile, confused population that central planning leaves in its wake. That great, timeless families, who follow a different directive than the progressive one, have taken advantage of—indeed are imperfectly in charge of—the movement toward the nightmare of a global society seems to me not only beyond question, but the only conservative explanation of a crescendo of anomalies. For those who read these words who might be intrigued by this admission of madness, a little research into the utterly central role of family foundations in giving us the schools we have —a role curiously overlooked by school histories, or dealt with *en passant*—will, I guarantee, reward the time spent with numerous marvels.

Back to business. Once you claim for your cause the sweeping power of compelling mass behavior, you have forfeited any claim at all to moral ground in my book. This is the rock on which all holistic ships founder, Rousseau's, Froebel's, Fichte,'s *et al.* You are practicing religion, then, and you are engaged in a holy war. I would imagine that nobody in 1992 is so naive not to recognize that the religion of our schools, since their inception, has been the Unitarian faith, but I am constantly disappointed. I may be misreading the conclusion of Ron's review: if you publicly disavow any right to assume control of the compulsion machinery, Ron, including those exquisite controls Jacques Ellul discusses in his wonderful book, *Propaganda*, I hope God smiles on your undertakings; but keep compulsion and it's hard for me not to regard cynically *any* justification which might be offered. Convincing me to accept your religion is legitimate and dialectical, forcing me to do so or tricking me into it is so vile that disdain or violence is the proper response.

There's much more at stake here than a little old-fashioned coercion —one-party systems are always corrupt, that is a fundamental truth of human nature. Eric Hoffer's *True Believer* was a turning point in my own life, however invested I seem to be here in my screed. In my view the only consensus ever valid is that consensus that arises slowly, painfully, naturally from millennial combats. Such consensus at its heart is a challenge to the premises of rationality, it cannot be hurried, cannot be hastened by Mind or Directives, by the Associations that John Dewey so loved. It contradicts the premises of the academic life as Francis Bacon conceived it, in service to the Central State. Such a belief calls for the destruction of Salomon's House as an unsurpassed agency of harm. Again, if you regard this as airy rhetoric, look about you at the cities and the natural world that Salomon's House, the haunt of the social engineers, has given us. I don't need to recite the dreary catalogue, use your own eyes and ears. What got us into the mess won't get us out in the immortal words of Nixon's "Checkers" speech.

Such consensus assumes a timeless wisdom that realizes a scale of historical process much vaster than the scale of human life. One of the instrumental advantages of a belief in Family, God and immortality is that it allows such a stepping back from the social arena that spans one's life. It's not hard for me to understand that Ron—or any other activist interested in collective action—wants to see substantial change in the span of his own years. But from my view, all such forced changes are doomed to cause harm, regardless of how beneficently they are conceived.

Such consensus at its heart is *sui generis*, exclusionary in the early part of the going, relatively local, slow spreading. The revolution that produced the Chinese peasantry or American native cultures is an example of the historical process in action at its finest—the human solutions in both cases are transcendentally brilliant, inspiring, funny, wonderful. Neither was fully worked out when they were destroyed by the demon of Western homelessness which sent European pirates and their slaves intervening in every laboratory of human life on the planet. That thousand-year destructive swath, currently managed by an academic service class, a secular priesthood, and protected by compulsion schooling, is what I write about in *Dumbing Us Down*, however indirectly. To dispossess the magical human possibilities underlying the appearance of Indians and Chinese, Queeg-Queeg and Dagoo, and replace these infinitely complex processes with a monochrome utopia is the act of a lunatic or a desperate man. All remote assignments of children's time and attention must, as I've said, be grounded in a vision of the good life, by its nature unprovable, by its nature religious at the core.

To the extent Puritan vision was that of a world order, it was diseased and murderous, but genius implicit in the Congregational *mechanism*, by a wonderful irony (which unfortunately became *obvious* over time to Unitarians) is so relentlessly *local*, so unmistakably *personal*, it sabotaged the global vision of Calvinism right from the beginning. It is a fascinating paradox never examined to my knowledge by academic scholarship and it is the real point I explore in "The Congregational Principle" (first published in *Maine Scholar)*.

It wasn't "something mysterious" inside the structure of Congregationalism in any sense like Adam Smith's "magic hand" to use Ron's phrases in the area where he goes farthest astray, it was one of the great fundamental discoveries of human social genius. What is mysterious is how it ever came into being—and sustained itself until the Unitarians destroyed it—right under the noses of the very social engineers who were giving New England its global economic mission. In Marx's felicitous locution, it illustrates strikingly the ignorant perfection of ordinary people, a perfection which is really the guiding inspiration of my teaching, my book, and my life. I learned the lesson from Monongahela, a town of ordinary people who perfected a community and the secret of meaning.

I was not "asserting" that colonists enjoyed nearly unconditional local choice, in point of fact that truth is built right into the structure of Congregationalism which demands that no two communities be alike, that all be rigorously tuned to that single congregation. *Mirabile dictu, I* grow weak with the joy of merely *saying* it! You have choice because there are choices to have under a Congregational system—under a Unitarian system there are none. The confusion here arose, I would guess, because Ron misread individual choice where specifically I meant *local* choice. Choice by local consensus. However, it isn't too long a reach to argue that individual choice had to be there, too, because of the boundless dark woods, the many different states available, (each independent in its culture), and always, too, the frontier. The sarcastic among you will say, "Some choice if I have to move out!" but consider first that even that option isn't available today in the Theocracy of Unitarianism, and consider, too, that moving out is as just a choice as human affairs offers: would that we still had it. If the global people get their way we're not even going to be able to move abroad— every place will be here. Then we will have arrived at the Utopia of social engineering, where everyone has to be "adjusted" to fit the pre-conceived model. Naturally a liberal interpretation will allow a 10% deviation either way from True North to accommodate human error economically.

For a wonderful example of human courage in just such a rigidly moralistic society as Ron characterizes New England to be, and what individual human courage can accomplish, see Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* where the elders plan to take little

Pearl from her mother, the letter-bearer, and she—alone and friendless, poor and ignorant—says starkly, "... over my dead body!" So much for that batch of social engineers with the power of the state behind them.

My point is that *only* by trusting ordinary people thoroughly and *only* by emphasizing the individual, the family, the neighborhood, the local economy, can we slowly win through to a better life. All synthetic schemes radically distort the only *slightly* plastic material of humanity, all of them are impious, all rob the future in many ways, none *work* for very long —see official human history for evidence. All leave the world worse at their dissolution than before they found it. The Progressives are right, there *has* been a progression through recorded history, but it has been a progression *backwards*—just as Plato said it had been. We might mark the decline symbolically from the time the invisible labor engine was fabricated to build the Great Pyramid, an event strangely commemorated on the back of our dollar bill, though no one can produce an adequate explanation why. Disraeli knew, I think, but he spoke about it in riddles.

So what to do with the strong human impulse to meddle, to tinker, to dominate, to improve, to not accept destiny? Well, my own answer is to do what you personally can, and suffer what you personally must. Accept the punishment of Prometheus if you want to play the part. And do I think you *should* play the part? Yes, of course, I've tried to myself all my adult life, but the other side of that dialectic is that I also believe that brilliant and beautiful lives are possible everywhere, under any duress or deprivation, as long as you see clearly what really matters.

Now what scares me a little about Ron's conclusion is that he, toward the end, seems to be calling some sort of invisible army together for mass social engineering projects. He says, "we simply do not have 200 years to wait for some 'invisible hand' to begin addressing these tremendous issues, "to lead" individuals and families and "self-satisfied" little communities, etc. OK, there seem to be two lines leading out from that one, that we act locally with likeminded people and try to convince the rest, and two, that we seize control of the apparatus and do it differently. I'd be with him on number one, and I'd cheer him on on number two if he led a *small guerilla band* in some boldly suicidal stroke. But change one master for another? Nope. Ron asks how the free market would provide educational opportunity for poor children, and the answer is that that is the wrong question. Of course the "market" can't do anything but act as a field for action, its a necessary pre-condition for solutions but in and of itself it's neutral. But government action is never neutral and cannot be —it must impose one or another religious view of the good life on everybody. And that is a pre-condition for bad things to happen, most often immediately, but also frequently when the second generation of zealots inherit the compulsion machinery and the police force. And even zealots are preferable to bureaucrats, who are the likeliest heirs.

This response has been a quick, spontaneous draft. I wish there were time to spend on creating a careful answer to some of the points Ron raises but there isn't, so this is the best I can do. I'd ask him and all your readers to carefully examine one huge unstated assumption that deeply disturbs me, namely that government schools have ever merited the term "public," implying a service to the commonality. This is based on such specious reasoning, and such a peculiar definition of what the public is, that it won't bear scrutiny. These are not public schools we are talking about, they are government schools —as much different from public as flowers are from weeds.

Indeed, that there is a "public" at all except in the bizarre fantasy of utopians and Deweyists and positivists of all stripes is something that merits careful consideration before reflexively accepting its existence. As a western Pennsylvanian I find the term more than mildly insulting. A cartoon of reality. The forces that oppress the public, to borrow some of Ron's language, are the forces that rob it of its right of self-determination —without which people cannot be principals, but only agents (or "educators").

Anyway, the dishes aren't washed, the shirts aren't ironed, a colony of ants has taken up residence in my bedroom, and I've got to fly to Spokane tomorrow morning to tell people why I think a schooling, any flavor, can't be an education. Deconstruct these synthetic institutions, the machinery is a constant temptation to the worst people on the planet to scheme for its control. As I read history they always win in the long run. But ah, if we broke the machinery. . .?

Sign me,
John Taylor Gatto

Holistic Education Review, **Winter 1992**

The following letter, written by your editor, was engendered by my disappointment at hearing from Ken Lebensold that he was not renewing his subscription to ΣΚΟΛΕ. It may sound as though my main issue was dented ego - but I don't think so. What do you think? And please read Ken's replies which follow, because having them was the whole point of my letter to begin with!

December 5, 1992.

Dear Ken Lebensold,

Thanks for your responsive note. I was very happy to learn you had read and appreciated **ΣΚΟΛΕ**! I am disappointed, of course, to hear that you don't find the journal of value on your own terms, but have no difficulty accepting your decision, at least in the adult part of my being. Of course you need to stop subscribing in that case, and I appreciate your frankness.

Additionally, however, I would be grateful if you would also receive my own views on the subject - not necessarily entirely in relation to you individually, but in relation to the philosophical, political, perhaps even institutional dimension of the reaction you have described as your reason for not finding **ΣΚΟΛΕ** to be of value. This is a difference of viewpoint I have with many, perhaps even most, of the GATE people whom Ron Miller describes as "greens," calling alternative school people "libertarians."

In this respect, I have an image of you as being a somewhat different sort of person from many of the GATE people whose writings I've been reading in *HER*, a few of whom I met at a GATE meeting in New York last spring. I guess I tend to view you as being more like Ron Miller, whom I've known, respected and loved since we first met, back in 1986.

I was one of the original 75 people invited to attend the Chicago planning meeting, and it was only because of Ron's fear that the indecent squabbling and character assassination against Jerry Mintz that was going on in the NCACS (Jerry being a very old friend of mine) might somehow get carried over to the brand new organization that I withdrew at Ron's request. He was like a man with a new car, fearing his kid would dent it. It's OK. He and I have much more going than some slight misunderstanding, so that is simply incidental. I mention it only so that you may know I had originally hoped to have some input into the GATE table of organization based on my years of experience with the Coalition, both good and not so good. I'm 73, have five kids, eleven grandkids.

Your note to me reminded me vividly of the kind of philosophical perspective Ron designates as he does, in particular in his review of John Taylor Gatto's book, *Dumbing Us Down*. In view of the centrality (politically speaking) for me of this issue of definitions and partisanship within the educational reform ranks, I would like, with your permission, to send you (gratis) the winter issue of ΣΚΟΛΕ, quite a bit of which is devoted to exploring the issue, and I'd very much like to receive a response, which I'd like to publish in next summer's issue. It is my belief that this is the area where we, as educational reformers, are most likely to fail in our mission to have an impact on the educational establishment in any other way than as individuals, but I'd like your opinion.

Ron told me on the phone that Pat [Farenga] had written him a hot letter - and John also, amounting to five or six pages - in response to his review. He seemed stunned, almost, and seemed to think the issue was about their challenging his ideology, or about their having different ideologies. Well, so did they! But I believe they're all three wrong. I think it's about brotherhood and about feeling threatened when another person doesn't recognize you as a brother. I have told Ron several times that it hurts my feelings, for example, when he insists on defining me - and all the alternative school people - as "libertarian," and that he sees us as a sub-class under "holism." It's not a principled response on my part, but a disappointed kid response, like saying, "Gee, Ron, how come you think I'm so inferior spiritually or so ignorant that I don't classify myself as holistic?" I'm not proud of the response, but it's sure there. There is a little kid in me, whether I like the fact or not. And that little kid has a life of her own. I struggle to live with "her" by being as honest and forgiving of myself and other people as I can.

I think Ron may also inadvertently hurt John Gatto's and Pat Farenga's feelings too, in classifying them as "libertarians." I had a long talk with Pat recently about the *HER* review. The reason this happens in me, at least, is that I feel classified as "other" - and not really one of "the people," whom Ron calls "greens," meaning the GATE people. When I called him, he told me he had no such intention, and of course I saw that immediately, and we were fine as friends again - and in fact, he said he was glad I wanted to reproduce his review, because HIS feelings had been hurt by John's and Pat's reactions, which to him felt misdirected.

Yet, when you look at Ron's response to what he perceives as the differences between NCACS and GATE people, it is not at all spiritual or loving. It is judgmental, historical, classificational, divisive in nature. Hey, Ron is a historian, among other things, and a damned good one. It's how his splendid mind works. He has no negative intent at all in doing this. And he may be right. But for me, that's an entirely different thing from being spiritual. It's not. No, it's not bad, just not spiritual. It's human. To quote Lucretius, "Humanus sum; nihil a me alienum esse puto." I am human. I consider nothing of humanness to be alien from me. Or you might call it "the Hitler within." I guess it's a Jungian point of view.

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within." I fervently believe this! People who insist on invidious distinctions between "spiritual" and "humanistic" are too abstract for me. I have to see everything from a person-centered point of view. Carl Rogers or Fritz Perls, I forget which, said that you can't view a person as part of a system and still see him as a person. It's a violation of types! "We're all bozos on this bus," to quote Firesign Theatre.

To accept one's shadow as a part of one's essential human nature is for me a first requisite for being spiritual. I'm not sure I see this in many GATE people. Too many of them, including Phil Gang, seem to identify with their own goodness to the extent of being incapable of seeing themselves as being as subject to the frailties of human ego projection as anyone else. That to me is the error in *calling* oneself spiritual. It is divisive - it feels to other people like holding oneself out as being somehow better than the people one labels as non-spiritual, and leads to the danger of Aristotle's "tragic flaw," hubris! Or can. It's why I have quit GATE. The people who came to the meeting in New York are pretty self-absorbed and snotty, in my book. Hey, that's OK. We all are. But it's like the pigs in *Animal Farm*, with their saying, "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." Well, to heck with that! That kind of "holier than thou" attitude brings out an almost irresistible desire in me to become offensively vulgar. It's as though they were saying, "My s--t doesn't stink; yours does."

And this sort of thing leads, in my book, to the question of what we are trying to do. Are we trying to prove that we are "purer than thou" or are we joining ranks to make a statement about the crying need to make changes that will benefit children? Sometimes I feel as though it is more important to the people who write the articles that get published in GATE to promote their professional reputations than to promote brotherhood among reformers. It sometimes feels as though we act like jealous siblings vying for a place in the sun of public exposure and opinion. No, not just the GATE people. The Coalition people, in spades!

So a part of my reaction to your saying that "the information in your newsletter just isn't useful enough to me right now" is to ask myself why - or perhaps how - you would want my "newsletter" - which I call a journal - to supply you with useful information. And why your not being a "direct participant in the alternative school movement" makes that crucial difference to you, especially as you follow this statement with the one saying that you "are extremely interested in community-building and child-loving education," which is what I see **ΣΚΟΛΕ** as being about!

Looking at the table of contents of the summer issue, it is all about school as community, community as school! School for what? I fail to understand how you could miss the message that I am saying, both indirectly through examples and directly, through editorials and comments, that my entire journal is about what I see as real spirituality!!! You might call it spirituality in action, as opposed to words about being spiritual or teaching spirituality or something else abstract.

It really strikes me as being blind that you GATE people do not recognize me simply because I do not see it as being spiritual to pin a label on myself. When they asked Gloria Steinem (for whom I hold no brief!) why she didn't look her age, which was forty, she responded, "This is what forty looks like." So have you considered the possibility that this may be what spirituality looks like? It might be more evident to you if you were to visit our school/community some time when you're in the east. We easterners are very, very different from many Californians, and my experience has been that Californians tend to be prejudiced on the subject. I hope I'm wrong.

I particularly liked your letter in the Summer, 1991, issue of ΣΚΟΛΗ in which you discussed the relationship between the issue of self-esteem as defined quantitatively by Charles Wieder and its true source in love and universal brotherhood rather than in the mind or in promotive techniques as such - and also took Jonathan Kozol to task for his ideological basis in the adversarial relationship. I was very disappointed when no one took up the issues you had raised and continued the discussion.

Similarly, I very much liked Ron Miller's review of *DUD*, and asked him for permission to print it in the upcoming issue of ΣΚΟΛΗ. So - I experience you and Ron as fellow seekers - but my fear is that you do not recognize me as one, as a sister, not just generically but in terms of the specifics of my philosophy of life and my experiences. In fact, I'd love to send you a copy of one or more of my books so you might judge for yourself whether or not I am fit to be seen by you as your sister.To quote Mowgli's cry, "We be of one blood, ye and I!" By the same token, Jonathan is a brother of mine - spiritually speaking - even though I totally agreed with your comment on his adversarial style. He has a lot to learn. But his white-hot passion is so beautiful, I have to forgive him for his biases. It has to do solely, for me, with the quality of one's heart. Cold-hearted people are hurtful people, explicitly because they do not recognize themselves as potentially hurtful.

So, for example, it hurts my feelings that you don't realize how diminished I feel when you say my material isn't relevant to your concerns because you aren't an alternative school person, as though my journal were ideological! See, I'm sort of shell-shocked. Or now they call it suffering from combat fatigue, I guess. It makes it hard for me to be a good sport. Losing you is not like losing one of the Coalition people, of whom I'm currently losing over half, mainly because they haven't taken up the "Super-membership" deal this year. But a lot of them have written that no one reads it anyway.

Do you know who does seem to value it? The home-schoolers. That's who. So many of the Coalition members seem to me so narcissistically tribal that I've given up on reaching them, except for a few. Plus the fact that I've already been shafted and thrown out on my can by the Coalition for NOT being ideologically correct and publishing only their stipulated data on demand! Now you say you are doing the same thing because I'm not spiritually oriented, like you. Oh, dear, how can we ever learn to care for and support each other when this kind of ideological nit-picking is going on in both camps? I feel dismayed. Well - that's the sum and substance of what I wanted to say to you. And yes, I take things very personally, and I know it wasn't personal. How it is, I guess. Some day I may grow up, but I doubt it.

Love,□

Mary Leue

December 15, 1992

Dear Mary,

I was very touched by your letter. I am not used to such personal attention from journal editors whom I don't know personally.

I am happy to take this opportunity to share some thoughts with you and your readers. First, I would like to identify myself amid the mishmash of categories and factions referred to in your letter and elsewhere.

I would like to begin with the concept of divisiveness or separation versus uniting or joining. You mention this a couple of times, as do others trying to build a community of visionary educators. I view this separation/unity issue as fundamental.

Although many speak of this matter, they do so more by way of pointing out that others are divisive than by finding ways to be unitive. You do this in your letter, and I often do it myself. Nevertheless, I think this is an error; I do not see how accusing others of divisiveness helps create unity.

Actually, for me it is not a matter of creating unity, but rather recognizing it and helping others to do the same. And this, for me, is the purpose of discussion, scholarship, relationships, education, and life itself. Although I often forget, my instincts and my intellect both tell me that we will only experience unity when that is our purpose.

This experience of unity, also known as bliss, inner peace, unconditional love, God, etc., is the purpose and the only purpose of life. This is my vantage point, my unwavering truth.

So, I identify myself as 'spiritual', but the point is not to make a distinction between 'spiritual' and 'non-spiritual' people. We are all one in spirit, and all living things are my brothers and sisters, no, they are simply other expressions of who I really am. Now, there are any number of arguments that this is itself divisive, a copout, authoritarian, etc. To engage in such arguments is unproductive, divisive, if you will. I am very willing, however, to exchange ideas on this general subject; in fact, I see that as my God-given task, for the moment.

The trouble we are having comes from a fundamentally inconsistent (and therefore incorrect) view of the nature of human thought. I happen to be a mathematician, and so deal intimately with the ways of logical argument, but it doesn't take a mathematician to recognize that all reasoning requires premises to argue from toward conclusions, and that if two people do not accept some common premise, there is no meaningful basis for discussion.

If we want unity, we must find some common ground. Yet experience has shown me that any reference to some fundamental truth which we must seek in order to understand our true oneness, is met with a great deal of defensiveness. Who am I to think that my opinions are the truth, or superior, or that I have the right to impose them? I never claim to have any greater access to truth, or that my opinions are the truth, or that I am superior to or more "right" than others, yet expressing these ideas does indeed seem to lead to separation rather than unity. Yet it is only these ideas that can possibly bring unity. Political, sociological, personal, etc. perspectives will always differ and lead to endless argument, endless because it is either circular, so massively complex and changeable that even the greatest scholars cannot get to the root of things, and/or inextricably tied to the idea that we are separate individuals with separate, often competing, interests.

Well, with that as a beginning, I will try to address some of the other points in your letter, hopefully producing greater clarity rather than polarization.

I have great respect for Ron Miller, personally and for his work, his dedication, his eloquence, and the quality of *Holistic Education Review*. Philosophically, however, I have not been able to join minds with him. He believes that spirituality and critical/historical thinking must be balanced to produce true holism. I do not understand what spirituality means in that context. If spirituality is the longing to recognize the oneness of life, then it cannot be "balanced" with something else. Everything we do either helps us come together, or emphasizes our separate interests. If critical thinking helps us to see our oneness, then it is an expression of spirituality, not something different with which it is balanced. If, instead, it evaluates, fragments, and separates us, then it moves in the opposite direction from spirituality and does not complement it. I expressed this as best I could in letters to Ron, but my efforts were separating rather than unifying.

So, as for greens, libertarians, etc., these are not meaningful labels to me. It is quite possible for some people, purely as an expression of love or spirit, to try to change governmental policy or deal with broad sweeping issues, while others feel that only by building communities from the individual or family on up can any lasting good happen. I wish them all the best of luck. Personally, I'm somewhere in between. I guess the phrase "Think globally, act locally" makes more and more sense to me.

As I have already told you in our phone conversation, I never classified you as 'non-spiritual'; my reason for dropping the subscription was that reading tends to push me into my own tendency to be very analytical and caught up in thoughts (remember, I'm a mathematician) and lose the spirit of the moment and of unconditional love, which are beyond thoughts as we know them. Since I tend to read whatever I receive, I wished to reduce my material to those books or magazines that I felt really helped me understand or communicate more deeply.

As for the emphasis on the personal, I have to take issue with you. I greatly admire and respect your process of continually saying how you feel, rather than trying to hide it or apologize for it. The fact remains that unconditional love is impersonal, and that personalizing things does separate us. Perhaps one cannot, as you say, view a person as part of a system and still see him as a person, but I do not see the virtue in seeing someone as a person. This sounds cold-hearted, but it is not. Each person is an expression of the Divine, and as such is to be loved with a warmth beyond what we know in this world. To focus on the person as an individual with distinct personality traits leads to honoring some aspects of her and disapproving of others, comparing individuals with each other, and generally losing sight of the Divine.

You mention the acknowledgement of the shadow a couple of times as a critical step in becoming spiritual. Ron Miller and many others have also said this. I have a different perspective on this. I don't know how 'shadow' is defined; I conceptualize it as all of our unloving thoughts. From this point of view, I am mostly shadow, because most of my thoughts are judgmental and unloving. However, the only thoughts I value are the loving ones. As far as I am concerned, the others slipped in while I was sleeping, not looking, or however you might want to phrase it. They can be systematically eliminated, just as we can clean all the grease spots off a pan. No matter how much grease or how caked-on it is, we do not consider it an essential part of the pan. To deny its presence is foolish, leading us to pretend we don't have any cleaning to do. To affirm its presence is also foolish, leading us to see it as an integral part of the pan. The only thing that makes sense is to simply clean the pan, or our mind. If acknowledging our 'shadow' helps us or others in this job, that is great.

I do not agree, therefore, that identifying with one's own goodness is an error, or causes separation. Our goodness is who we really are, and what we should identify with. If others feel, as you say, as if this is holding ourselves out as somehow better than others, then we should reassure them that we identify with their goodness equally as with our own, no matter what their or our human 'errors' may be. We will never know God by identifying with human frailties; in fact, it is this very identification that keeps us from knowing God.

This feels like an adequate answer for now, but I would certainly encourage responses, because a lot of questions arise, and I have spent a lot of time thinking, feeling, and praying about all this, so can probably give coherent responses to those questions. I love you all.

Ken

And the following is the essay Ken wrote us after having given the matter additional thought and prayerful attention. I hope readers of ΣΚΟΛΕ can give it the response it deserves, because it is my belief that what Ken is saying goes a very long way toward resolving the kinds of differences John Gatto and Ron Miller are wrestling with.

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February 12, 1993

Dear Mary and *ΣΚΟΛΕ* readers:

Thank you for sending me the Winter issue *ΣΚΟΛΕ*. It is full of interesting material, which I am eager to comment on, along with your letter of December 5. I have been thinking a great deal lately about the nature and purpose of ideas, and much of my commentary will reflect that.

First, let me deal with the personal issues raised in your letter. I subscribe to and read a fair number of journals (apologies for the careless use of the word "newsletter"), because I want to keep abreast of what a certain segment of the population is thinking and doing. At the same time, I like to keep reading in perspective, as for me the real source of truth is beyond verbal expression, and this is easy to lose sight of when immersed in complex, passionate, and often beautiful writing. Sometimes a new journal strikes me as providing information or perspectives I feel I am lacking; other times a journal I already get provides input I feel I have already assimilated, obtain elsewhere, or no longer seems relevant. These decisions are made largely on an intuitive basis. My decision to stop receiving *ΣΚΟΛΕ* (reversed, at least for now), was based not on any judgment of the validity of its content or your personality or philosophy. I do not consider you "unspiritual" at all, nor a member of some less lofty subclass of alternative educators, and although I don't always agree with you, I deeply respect your willingness to put your cards on the table, and not pretend to feel differently than you do just to fit some presumed standard of thought or behavior.

I have never had the good fortune to work in an alternative school (although I do alternative education all the time). I came close once, but the arrangement fell through. Long before I developed any coherent philosophy of life, I was drawn to detailed analysis and working out of ideas. I did not focus on education as a field of study, but got a couple of advanced degrees. As a result, it has been much more available to make my living in higher education in relatively mainstream institutions. It seems to me that this is why I am not an "alternative school person," not a difference in philosophy. I don't consider myself a GATE person either, although I have great respect for and involvement in the organization. I see it as a visionary organization which matches my own vision quite closely, and this is perhaps the biggest difference I see between GATE and the alternative ed and home school movements. GATE is more moved by a vision of what education, generally, can and must be. The other organizations are more concerned with the immediate support and development of real alternative schools. I think both are equally important. In fact, I believe that at this time the vision is clear enough and the implementation is what's necessary (as I indicated in my article in *Holistic Education Review).* Nevertheless, due to my purely personal history and proclivities, it is more natural for me to be involved (at this time) in a visionary network than a hands-on alternative schooling one. No judgment is implied.

I believe there is a significant unity of vision within GATE, but I do not see a unity of philosophy. Ron Miller, for example, is a lovely person who is truly dedicated to a vision of education which honors the spiritual and is grounded in (more or less) universally affirmed values: peace, social justice, ecological consciousness, personal integrity, etc. He is also a brilliant thinker and an accomplished scholar. I would like to think that is an accurate description of myself, as well. Yet, I cannot join with Ron philosophically; in truth, I don't believe I really understand Ron's philosophy, because it doesn't make sense to me, and I know it does to him. Ron seems to believe in the balancing of two realms, the spiritual, where all is bliss and there are no problems, and the political, where conflicts and injustices abound which have to be worked out. He sees the tension between these realms as the cutting edge for holistic educators (and others). Yet if the spiritual is real (as I fully believe), and not an artifact or simply a source of inspiration, then there is unity and bliss. This must, then, be the final transcendence, balancing, if you will, of all worldly opposites and tensions. To suggest that it must be balanced against the political, or critical/historical, or whatever words one uses, is to deny unity, to affirm that no matter how much one's perspective is broadened, no matter how inclusive, no matter how unified, there is still an opposite with which it is in tension and in which tension or conflict we must live to be truly whole.

Spirituality is no more or less than the idea of final and total unity, in which there is no conflict possible. I cannot understand it in any other way. Then everything we do either leads us closer to this idea, this state, or it moves us away. Political or critical analysis and involvement is a time-honored activity of the spiritual; I am not judging against it. But it is more often used to reinforce conflict and separation, and then it obscures the spiritual. So, this type of work can be an expression of the spiritual idea or an obstruction to it, but in no case can it be something separate against which spirituality must be balanced. I hasten to add that "spiritual" language can also be used for unity or separation

Well, this is a convenient lead-in to philosophical, as opposed to personal, matters. Most of us in the holistic education movement (and many other social movements as well) call for unity, yet we don't seem to achieve it. This is because we don't understand it. Each person calls for unity with his or her own personal, political, social, philosophical, etc. perspective. *This will never happen.* We clearly understand this, because we keep pointing to other people's inconsistency in pushing their own ideas while calling for inclusiveness and unity. How easy it continues to be to analyze and judge the ideas and actions of others instead of attending to our own integrity .

We must seek unity for its own sake, not as a means to something else. Although this concept is quite simple, it is very difficult to grasp for people accustomed to thinking differently. It is not a matter of intelligence, reflectiveness, or deftness in logic, although these can certainly be helpful tools. It is a matter of a fundamentally different style of working things out. So far, I have had great difficulty communicating this, but I must keep trying.

I am writing this letter in fragments at work, and in the interim I have been thinking a great deal about these questions.

One thing that just struck me has to do with images and stories. Of course, images and stories have a personal power that abstract argument lacks; this I already understood. What is new to me is the realization that images and stories are generally accepted on their own terms. They may be misunderstood, disapproved of, opposed, but as a rule, they are not picked apart and argued with. Their impact is experienced holistically, not denied or reconfigured to fit our preexisting ideas. I am accustomed to expressing myself with ideas rather than pictures or stories, yet the outcome is too often fragmentation rather than unity. Others seem to see my idea in the light of their own way of constructing thought, and support those aspects that fit and oppose those that don't. I then am tempted to clarify my idea and reveal the errors of logic in the criticism, which means I defend my idea and my contextual base rather than broadening my understanding. It would be no better to agree with my critics without understanding their whole picture. This only means I give up on deep communication for the appearance of openmindedness. This, I believe, is a dilemma all visionary intellectuals must face: the purpose of our words is neither to bully others into agreement nor to create a purely abstract thing of beauty which a few other scholars can appreciate, but to share the vision behind our words, to communicate its inherent beauty so that it is felt by others. This is what it means to change the world.

Accordingly, I am going to make a first attempt here at using words as an art form, to describe my experience of life rather than argue for it.

I see unity as the nature of reality. It is not a human goal to be argued for or against, or weighed against other goals. Humans have the remarkable but unfortunate ability to make up our own version of reality and try and make reality fit, and we have chosen to exercise this ability. My experience has been that any attempt to discuss why we have made this choice only buries us deeper in it. On the other hand, it is helpful to understand why we should undo this choice and accept reality as it is.

In fact, there is every reason to make a new choice. Every value which has deeply captured the human heart is the hearing of the call for realization. Call it freedom, integrity, bliss, clarity, happiness, peace, love, God, fearlessness, trust, faith, creativity, Nirvana, unity, or any name you like. They are all the same goal; they could not be different and have any meaning. What kind of freedom is the ability to choose between trade-offs, giving up something valuable either way? What kind of love turns into despair or hatred when the beloved acts according to their nature rather than our expectations? What kind of trust recognizes the possibility of betrayal? To pit these transcendent goals against each other is to deeply misunderstand them, and to recreate an illusion in which none of them is achievable.

All of our mental miseries, all our judgments, our attacks, our sense of victimization, confusion, despair, etc. are another form of this call, this reminder that the attempt to make another version of reality is meaningless *because* it is not acceptable even on its own terms .

What I see in reality is unrestricted flow, infinite, carefree, and simple. This reality can in some measure be captured in words. I also see another version of reality, one in which ideas go around in circles with no escape, in which every insight into reality becomes a private truth, cordoned off from others with a fortress of definitions, arguments, and other defenses ranging from ridicule and condemnation to abuse and murder. We convince ourselves that our private fortresses are good, and the evil is outside, but I do not see that, at least not now. I see my own fortress, my own defenses and philosophical justifications, my own appeals for unity with my version of love or truth, as the evil.

There are those who fear unity as a goal, because they believe unity is morally neutral, that unity can be achieved around an evil or immoral idea as easily as a good one. This is not what I see. What I see instead is that certain ideas are seen as evil or immoral exactly because unity cannot come of them. Of course, in our confused world, agreement among some people can be achieved for any idea, because we believe that total unity is impossible, so we settle for partial agreement, even with intrinsically divisive ideas which could not possibly lead to real unity. But total unity *is* possible, and agreement is not necessarily joining. If you disagree with me in a way that opens my heart to who you really are, you have joined with me, and if you agree with my judgments, illusions, and perceptions of limitations, you are only delaying my realization of unity.

I liked Dan Sullivan's article; I felt it as an act of removal of some of the threads of illusion, revealing a deeper unity of thought beneath the surface appearance of disagreement. As to the exchange between John Gatto and Ron Miller (which now includes a fairly lengthy reply from Gatto to Miller's book review, published in *Holistic Education Review*), it is tempting to join the fray and give my views about whether the solutions to our political ills lie in families and small communities, social action on a broader scale, or the degree to which these should be proportioned. I am not at a loss for such ideas. My experience and gut feelings, however, tell me that the real issue here is that Miller and Gatto are squandering their mental resources in carrying on this exchange.

It is evident to me that Gatto is performing a great service in revealing in a very effective way the spirit of today's public schooling. Miller, in his own way, is bringing a great deal of insight to this same question. I realize that pitting beautiful ideas against each other in scholarly combat is the scholarly ideal of the search for truth, but if one *sees* the almost inevitable results, one would approach this business much more cautiously. (Believe me, I am a very slow learner; I continue to squander my own intellectual energies in similar pursuits). The highly probable results are:

1) debate (not really dialogue) as a state of affairs which is fed indefinitely rather than a pathway to greater understanding;

2) the weakening of the ideas being debated through continual attack and defense;

3) an increasing conviction that the conflict between these ideas is itself the truth;

4) reinforcing of the scholarly error that the truth is boundlessly complex rather than simple at a higher level of order.

A similar situation entails in many debates over issues. Abortion is an obvious one. The reality of the abortion debate, as I see and feel it, is an intense separation between two groups of people, most of whom are not pregnant women and none of whom are unborn children, supposedly on behalf of one of these groups. I do not see either women or unborn children as beneficiaries of this confrontation; I suspect both groups are worse off by any reasonable measure as a result of it. I have to wonder, in view of this, whether the avid participants on both sides have really checked their own purpose in their involvement, for what they have created is a far different thing than what they profess to be fighting for.

I believe that treating ideas as competing entities which must prove themselves worthy in (logical) battle is similar to treating economic or personal success as a competition between suitors, students, companies, or whatever. There is a place for it in the scheme of things, but not by far the dominant place it now occupies. Oddly, the people who most rail against competition in these other domains do not see its equally destructive effects in the realm of ideas .

There is so much more to say than I can reasonably do in one letter, and I expect that despite my intention to bring about more harmony in the use of ideas, I will generate a great deal of opposition. I may easily create more separation than unity, but words, for better or worse, are my primary tools for uncovering (not creating) the unity that we seem blind to, so I must keep learning how to use them better.

There is one thing more I feel compelled to say. The discussion between Miller and Gatto is, if I understand it correctly, largely about the relationship between the individual or small group and the larger society as a whole. The relationship between the individual and society, while far from being a new question, is a seminal issue of our time, as more and more people are arguing that we have carried individualism too far, that rights must be weighed against responsibilities, that we have neglected the well-being of our social fabric by wanting to grant unlimited individual freedom. Yet many others are objecting that there is too little personal freedom, too many laws, that society restricts its citizens in the most personal areas and in petty, arbitrary, inconsistent, and unjust ways.

I think this whole question is invalid, based on a premise which, when looked at, strains credulity, and that is, that there is some conflict between personal freedom and social well-being. If this were so, I would see no hope for life, for it is on its face self-contradictory and self-destructive.

It is clear to me that the health of the social fabric and of individual freedom are not threatened by each other, but rather both are threatened by a total misunderstanding of what health is. "Individualists" who pollute, steal, overconsume, ridicule others, etc., are not healthy or happy; they are simply deluded by a cultural error of grand proportions: that what is valuable in life is what is scarce and temporary, making value itself limited by definition. Social theorists who see improvement in the insistence on individual sacrifice for the common good and support for a system of rules that compel individuals to behave according to somebody's moral philosophy are overcome by the same delusion: there is not enough for everyone, so we must dole out the goodies, whether material goods or freedom of action. What a grim and, ultimately, hopeless view of reality. If value is scarce, and we all must compete for it, how can there ever be unity? Will there ever be consensus around the idea of personal sacrifice or self-denial? I can't see it.

Love, friendship, creativity, joy, these are the things of value, and there is a limitless supply of them. In fact, they increase when shared, and in this way keep expanding. But if value is given to material resources or other scarce items, these values contract rather than expand, because their law of sharing is violated.

I imagine that many people will take issue, if not offense, at this, claiming that it ignores the "very real" physical and emotional hardships that come about due to greed, violence, abuse, etc. I very much want to see the end of this suffering; it is a definite block to the awareness of the unity I seek, and I will not experience this unity while those around me suffer. I strongly support efforts to reduce or eliminate inequality, injustice, poverty, violence, hatred, etc. This is an integral part of my vision. I deeply feel, however, that as long as we perceive guilty people or oppressors who are somehow benefiting at the expense of innocent victims, we will strengthen rather than weaken the distorted social order. As a purely logical matter, the belief in scarcity and the ability to gain by causing harm to others must lead to conflict, pain, and delusion. Self-interest, almost by definition, is the law of life. The only way some abstract principle such as fairness, moderation, or sacrifice can take hold is if it is understood to *be* self-interest.

I want to make it explicit, then. To conceptualize our problems as one of guilty people gaining advantage at the expense of innocent ones is inherently divisive, reinforces itself in the short run (winners will want to keep winning; losers will want to start winning), and is self-destructive in the long run (that is, this conceptualization induces a negative feedback loop that sooner or later destroys itself). Instead, I suggest that our situation is one of everyone losing as a result of a delusive thought system. When people see that they are all losing, they will stop playing the game and will recognize that a game in which abundance rules is much more satisfying than one in which scarcity rules. When this occurs, poverty, discrimination, alienation, etc., will cease to exist, because they are not a part of the game. There will not be more people than the earth can support, because that would make no sense in this game. Everyone will have enough food, because all strategies in this game lead to such a result. Is this an unrealistic, utopian, view? Utopian, yes, but not unrealistic. Why should we take it as a given that a good, free, harmonious world is impossible? Is the purpose of life to deny its own potential?

Granted, it may be a long while before this realization of unity comes to pass, and in the meantime, efforts to reduce poverty, violence, and the rest of it are called for. As I said earlier, I strongly support such efforts. But I see no gain in anger, condemnation, laying blame, or reinforcing the idea that some people actually gain through this insanity. These approaches, unless used with transcendent consciousness, are self-defeating.

What has all this to do with education? Everything, because it is about changing our collective mind-set. Since compulsion is inherently divisive, I certainly do not advocate forcing people to study these ideas. In fact, the holistic education community collectively has a beautiful set of ideas as to how to open up education so that students and others are more free to explore their own understanding of truth, which is all I seek. I have nothing really to add.

I certainly welcome dialogue on these points, whether to clarify and deepen them, expose errors in them, or open up new perspectives. For obvious reasons, however, I see no advantage to defending or arguing them. Although I recognize that I have mixed the language of logic and belief with that of vision or feeling, this still represents my best explication as to what I see as the whole, and as such is more a description of my experience than my opinions. It is therefore disunifying and meaningless to argue for it.

Thanks for listening.

Ken Lebensold
Oakland, CA

SPIRITUALITY AS A FACTOR IN EDUCATIONAL THEORY

by William H. Leue

Some time ago Ron Miller sent my wife Mary Leue, a manuscript copy of his new book on developments in educational theory in modern times. I think that we were both very favorably impressed by the manuscript except for the treatment of the last thing that he took up, the subject of "spirituality." He said that most writers on educational theory and reform tended to ignore or shy away from this issue. Our tradition calls for a sharp separation between church and state, and public educational control is definitely in the area of the realm of state control, so concern with developing spiritual values should be left to the autonomous religious institutions, churches, temples, mosques, and so on to teach and promote spirituality. Ron Miller says that to maintain this barrier is not a good thing.

I agree with him, but I think that the concept of spirituality will have to be examined and refined before it can be offered to everyone. Otherwise it will contain all the stuff that most sharply divides people and turns them against each other, Catholics against Protestants, Hindus against Muslims. and so forth, their gods and religious heroes, saints, avatars, bodhisatvas and founders of religious traditions, Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Jesus, Mohammed and so on.

Many other aspects of religious traditions seem to become centers of discord and negative feelings and scorn among organized religious traditions: dietary laws, differences of dress and religious ideas and practices tend to divide people and turn them against each other. None of these without further interpretation can be the common core of the spirituality which we are seeking. I'm sure it's there but it will not be easy to unmask it. Let me try, and I can only hope that I won't completely lose that core and antagonize everyone.

Perhaps the core of spirituality is not in the content of our emotionally charged beliefs but in the way in which we hold and pursue them. Are they seals of approval, talismans of righteousness? - or are they guides and glimpses of increasing awareness of possibilities of feelings and acts which can make life fuller, more full of active achievement and creative expansion of possibilities?

But this way of describing what we are seeking in our quest for spirituality is still relying too much on emotional expression and has too little specifiable content. Can anything be done about that?

I can only try, and I see no easy way. The only path that I see opening up to me takes us into philosophical, even metaphysical realms where many of us feel very much not at home - and here we tend to fall back on familiar symbols and imagery, which plunges us back into the situation we were trying to extricate ourselves from, a few paragraphs back.

Well, you may think that I am trying to pull you into an even deeper and messier pit, but I can only invite you to give it a try.

I can see several paths that I've tried, but I find many of them too fussy and alien, so I am going to enter by way of good old American pragmatism, and, more specifically, John Dewey, who started as a reformer and philosopher of education and went on to broaden and deepen his quest.

Appealing to such commonplace notions as, "We learn to do by doing," Dewey promotes a very active learning process in which the student is not just the recipient of information poured into him but is an active agent pursuing a quest to understand the problem and actively work, preferably in cooperation with others, to reach the solution as a product of his and their active search. Truth, knowledge and skill are not just something to be absorbed, but are an essential part of an active life process. Learning is not just a necessary condition of achieving goals in life; it is a central aspect of living, at least for human beings.

And it is not just something that applies to the aspect of life we associate with education. It shows up in expanded forms in all aspects and activities of human life. One of the last things that Dewey wrote was a book on aesthetics titled *Art as Experience*, in which he sees creative activity as another aspect of the reworking of "experience," but now richer, more emotionally charged slices of experience than in the more limited cognitive quest.

I think that it is necessary to note here the special meaning he gives to "experience." It does not have the limited subjective meaning given to it by empiricists, but refers to all fully concrete awareness rather than some limited abstraction, which is what we focus on in cognitive observation. "Experience," then, designates the fully concrete world, the interaction point between our active awareness process and the world we encounter, and this is for Dewey the fully concrete realm, where the action is taking place, and the metaphysical focus of the world, the center of the world, the center of the action, and so, the focus of reality.

I would like to try to extend this perspective on spirituality as an aspect within, rather than separated from, ordinary experience, by having a brief look at Alfred North Whitehead's deeper and more complex metaphysics, but I fear getting snarled in its complexities. I don't want to try to explain "eternal objects" and "prehension" and other far-out concepts, but will take a quick dive in and see if I can up with something that will enhance our view without too many entanglements.

Whitehead conceives of reality as composed of a tremendous swarm of events, "actual occasions," each of which is a momentary perspective on everything from its unique point of view, far off or close up or far away in time. Each has a very prior internal life during which it "prehends," actively reaches out

This view allows whole universes to come into a condition of flourishing and then fade out - or at least fade to a whisper - but seems also to foreshadow an everlasting promise of creative activity. It sees the future as always open, but open to almost total destruction as well as to richer fulfillments. How does that strike you as a model for spirituality? Would you prefer the prospect of unending sameness? Just step up and choose your reality - but remember the story about what happens when the coffee break is over in hell.

William H. Leue, the husband of the editor of ΣΚΟΛΕ, is a retired professor of philosophy from the State University of New York at Albany. Since his doctoral thesis was on the subject of Alfred North Whitehead's theory of value, and since John Dewey is second on his personal list of philosophers to be taken seriously as contributors to the current world crisis in values - I managed to persuade him to respond to Ron Miller's somewhat inchoate notion of "spirituality" as a central criterion for children's schooling. Not that that makes Ron exceptional!

At the very least, I hope that what emerges from his views is the immediacy and "concreteness," to use Whitehead's term - or as I would put it, the "person-centeredness," of the whole notion of the spiritual. It most certainly cannot be bottled and sold as a "system"! Or, as it says elsewhere of the Holy Spirit, it bloweth where it listeth. Thus, it behooves us all to remember to be humble in the face of this mysterium tremendum*!*

LETTERS:

January 20, 1993.

The Journal of Alternative Education
72 Philip Street
Albany, NY 12202

Dear friends:

I am pleased that you elected to publish the article on "Dimensions of Community" which I wrote for *Community Service News.*

I note that you do fairly often reprint articles from other publications, and it occurs to me that you might be interested in reprinting the enclosed article about the Arthur Morgan School, which recently appeared in *The Green Revolution* [which appears starting on page 11].

You do seem to collect a lot of worthwhile material.

Cordially,
Ernest Morgan

P.S. The note at the end of my article in your Winter, 1993, issue was not completely accurate. My father, Arthur Morgan, was not the founder of Antioch College. Antioch was opened in 1853 under the presidency of Horace Mann. Arthur Morgan took over in 1921 when the college was dying, and created a pioneering institution. Lucy Griscom was not my wife, but my stepmother, and an important partner with Arthur in educational pioneering. My wife was Elizabeth Morey, who started the Arthur Morgan School with my help, in 1962. She died in 1971.

Profound editorial apologies to Mr. Morgan for not remembering - and reporting - accurately this important personal and historical data about his remarkable family, and most particularly about his own extraordinary wife!

M. Leue, ed.

6-18 1-chome, Kitano-cho,
Chuo-ku, Kobe 650,
Japan.

19th October 1992 .

Dear Jerry [Mintz],

Thanks a lot for your latest *Aerogramme* and also for putting in the piece about my studies with Antioch.

I was interested to see that you have a 'Summerhill Video' for sale and so am enclosing $25.00 in payment and should be very glad if you would send me a copy. Please let me know if you need any extra for postage.

My study of 'Alternative Education & Literature' continues and keeps me very busy in between doing that and teaching at my college . It is very interesting though and I have been reading, and in some cases re-reading, a lot of books on the subject and original material from people like Neill and many others. Fortunately, Shinichiro Hori has many of the books that I need, so I've been able to borrow them from him. I 've also done a lot of practical work, visiting schools in Japan to see what the state of the education system is really like here and have also been doing some work helping out Hori at his Kinokuni Children's Village.

Hori's school is well under way now and he has the maximum number of students that he can take - 95. Most of them board at the school during the week and go home at weekends, except for a few that come from the far-flung parts of Japan and have to stay there the whole term. The school is the first of its kind in Japan that has actually been recognized as a school by the Ministry of Education and so has come under a lot of scrutiny and attention from the media in these early days. Unfortunately there have been some early problems with the staff and following disagreements on a number of topics, four of the staff have left the school. It is too early to assess what effect this will have, if any, but hopefully this will not adversely affect the running of the school. This summer, in August, the annual weekend seminar of the A.S. Neill Association was held at Kinokuni. I attended and gave a talk on Summerhill and showed a video on the first evening of the weekend. I am often asked to talk about Summerhill as I was once a member of the staff there and have had a book, *Diary of a Summerhill Teacher*, published here in Japanese.

By the way, I am also now in contact with Kazu Kojima from the Global School, which is not so far from where I live, and I am going there again for a weekend meeting on alternative education at the end of this month.

I am enclosing copies of some articles that I have written which might interest you - forgive me if I have already sent them before. The one on Homer Lane was written for my Antioch M.A. If you know of anyone in the U.S. who might be interested in printing it I should be very pleased. Anyway, I hope you are well and look forward to meeting you again sometime.

John Potter

Note: This is not "our" John Potter but another one, also English, and the article he mentions is the one on Homer Lane and Summerhill which appears on pages 45-57.

Thanks to Jerry Mintz for passing on John's splendid article!

Two communiqués from our distinguished colleague and fellow conspirator on the western front, Carlos Bonilla:

2/2/93

Hi, Mary:

From today's *STOCKTON RECORD;* thought you would find it interesting [The Kohl Open School article on page 17 above].

Was going to send a copy to Michael Traugot but, having written to him at least six (6) times and never having received even a courtesy reply I figured it would be a waste.-

Hope all is well! Stay well -

Love, Carlos
1020 N. Commerce
Stockton, CA 95202
(209) 466-3883

P.S.: I attempted to make contact with well over fifty people (names from NCACS, AERO, ALLPIE, etc., etc.) and only five bothered to reciprocate; so, what is the use?

My intention had been to try to attend the NCACS conference in Arkansas (sounds like a beautiful area) but these individuals' lack of involvement certainly killed my incentive.

P.P.S.: No wonder it is difficult for the public at large to recognize the importance of - and the important work - which alternative schools are doing!

Editorial response:

Dear Carlos,

Having felt myself to be the (unwilling) recipient of the kind of indifference to human feelings of which you speak, I cannot fault your observations. This having been said, however, it might be helpful to bear in mind that we are all capable of blind spots in regard to other people, but that none of us intends any such thing! And we are all equally capable of growth, of change!

My way of doing this journal has become to let as much as possible of this kind of human undercurrent to our more public behaviors hang out to dry where they belong - in public - in hopes that the sorts of interchanges that work so very well in our schools will begin to work in our organizations as well!

To you as a valued friend and colleague, I would urge that you not hold any one person responsible for this behavior, since it *is* unintended, especially not Michael, who is going through his own life passage just now, like a lot of us ex-hippies! He's a great guy when you get to know him. And yes, I know he hasn't made that easy!

So please come to the Arkansas conference and get to know a few of us personally. I know *at least* three of us who will guarantee you as many warm hugs as you can put up with! And we can both take our lumps for airing this stuff. A lot of people hate that and wish I'd quit!

Love, Mary

2/13/93

Mary:

Loved your letter, thank you! Here is mine back, please print "as is," and, as a matter of fact, if you can make it more poignant, please feel free to do so! [I had sent his back for permission to print it "as is."]

Again, two questions:
1. Why don't you and Jerry Mintz take over the running of NCACS? These are important times in our nation and in education so we mustn't waste the wonderful opportunity to foment the growth of **ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION!** To do so would be a crime to this great nation's children.

2. Don't forget the possibility of helping John T. GAtto's crusade through the sale of my publications; any profit from the sales can be turned over to his cause. [See advertisements at the end of this issue for information about Carlos' book, *Parental Choice in Education: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly ($6).*

I do look forward to the Arkansas meeting and - as you say - "pressing the flesh"; there is a conflict with some teaching I have scheduled in Israel but it may yet be worked out. - There is time enough to - possibly - re-schedule. -

Stay well and healthy,
Much love,
Carlos

P.S. You may print this - or part of it - also if you wish.

TWO LETTERS SENT ON BY CARLOS:

1/20/93

Dear Carlos,

What a nice birthday present! I was beginning to think that no one else was interested in why kids drop out of school. Everyone around here seems preoccupied with restructuring public schools or high tech equipment. I'm all for restructuring if some of the solutions your furry friends prompted you to write about are addressed!

My school, an alternative high, is really a mixed bag of kids - poor, middle class, black, white, hispanic, first or second generation Americans as well as those with long ancestries supported by welfare. One third of these students are successfully graduating from our school after being thrown out of regular education. This percentage seemed unacceptable to me. With the increased money being spent per pupil, I felt more students should graduate.

In-school changes helped somewhat. But schools are hard to change, as you well know. Research pointed to parents, and I felt that parents would be motivated to help once they felt welcomed and comfortable in the parent-teacher partnership. What you have said about the language barriers, and lack of valuing parent opinions certainly rang a bell with me. My principal was appalled when I suggested we bring parents into the school. He had been trying his hardest to keep them out!

Do your excellent opinions stem from your own research? I would like a copy of your book, *School Dropouts: The Tragedy of America's Undereducated Youth*. It sounds like an excellent resource! What do you mean by "proven format"? If you like, I could send you a review of literature I just completed on the subject of parental involvement in schooling. Probably Cipollone, Haley and Berry are the current researchers who have influenced me the most.

This semester I am finishing the residency portion of my doctoral work, soon to be writing my thesis. I can't understand why more people aren't focusing on the numbers of unprepared students who drop out of school. Twenty years ago these kids could find jobs that could support them. Now, people without at least a high school education are doomed to poverty.

Well, you can see I have strong feelings. My specially designed parent support group meets for the first time on Feb.4. I hope I still feel confident and positive after this get-together! I was so glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Linda
Linda S. Bryant
499 East St.
Bridgewater, MA 02379
H: (508) 586-0944
W: (508) 580-7203

27 Jan. '93.

Dear Carlos Bonilla:

Thank you for responding so positively to my letter in NCACS winter '93 newsletter. I no longer work in a public school (or anywhere, for that matter) because it was too painful. I was/am a child advocate, and this is too threatening to most adults. My goal is to start a Summervalley here in Ashland. Currently, I am networking with other schools across the country.

Are you familiar with the status of the voucher system? It seems the only sane thing I have heard in a while. Is it in operation in CA? I am hoping OR will adopt it so I won't have to worry about tuition!

Also, if you know about grants for non-profit "schools," I would be grateful for info.

Thank you for sending so much information to me about the work you're doing on education. Parental involvement certainly means a lot - but I think many parents are not able/interested. Our society demands much (if we yield) and it *is* a capitalistic one. Parents spend all day working and oftentimes "ship" their kids off to school, etc., etc. You know the scene. There are not enough hours in a day to be involved with *oneself*, let alone one's children. I, of course, am *not* in that scene. I live *very* simply and am very involved with my own growth as well as my son's. I see this (TIME) as a luxury; many view our lifestyle as austere (in the plain sense, I use that word).

Ashland is pretty lily-white. Cultural diversity is not present in #s and class still *deeply* divides. Mexicans live in hovels in poorer areas, doing "migrant" labor; blacks are few in numbers; Asians are in college. We have homeless but also Shakespeare. Class issues burn inside me - especially when I think of starting Summervalley. If the voucher system were in place, I could have children of different classes (assuming, of course, that their parents are of the Summerhill ilk) but without that, I will have children whose parents can afford to let them learn democracy and self-regulation. I must accept that - I can only do a little.

If you are a proponent of working to change public schools, I know what a task you have! The curriculum must change (to include WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF COLOR AND PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT ABILITIES) but then the TEACHER must also be someone committed to EQUALITY in the classroom. I know how sick I felt learning about a bunch of dead, white men - over and over. I finally sought women's studies to GET A PERSPECTIVE.

Ah, I've gone on a bit. Thanks for writing!

Michaelia Morgan
75 1/2 Alida St.
Ashland, OR 97520
(503) 482-7732

**UPATTINAS SCHOOL OPEN COMMUNITY CORP.
429 GREENRIDGE RD.,
GLENMOORE PA. 19343**

December 2, 1992

Dear Mary,

Thank you for printing my most recent piece. It's fun to see my work in print and, without the PhD I'd probably never see that in other journals. What a service you are doing for us!

It does seem as though we can't get past your feeling that the Coalition is anti-SKOLE (my computer can't do those fancy letters), and I really regret that because I am very Coalition and very pro-SKOLE. As for your other question about the Know Nothingism, I believe that comes from burn-out and that it is beginning to turn around again. I meet many more people now who are vitally interested in alternatives than I did even one year ago. I hope I'm right. For a time it seemed hard just to keep going from one day to the next, so people neglected their own needs to find community from outside their schools. I know I struggled with that during our dark years. But now, even though I am so busy, I relish contact with others and try to find time to work with people outside of our own school. My staff really enjoys SKOLE and I often bring something from it to staff meeting.

You should be receiving my super membership sub soon, but here's another sub because we need more than one copy. Please also send along a few sample copies if you have them. I often have people here who might benefit by one and subscribe if I could give them one.

Have a wonderful Winter Holiday. My best to everyone there.

Sandy

Sandy Hurst, former president of NCACS, head of Upattinas School, now Open Community Corp., longtime loyal member of the Board of the Coalition, has been in the forefront of Alternative Education since its inception during the sixties and seventies. Sandy is a frequent and valued contributor to ΣΚΟΛΕ. Too bad she doesn't have a Mac with a Symbol font. On the other hand, Michael (Coalition Newsletter editor) has just now discovered his!

November 16, 1992.

Dear Mary,

Enclosed is a check for one year's subscription to your journal. The edition you sent, trusting in my letter of interest, was thought-provoking and helpful.

I have served as a school board member and president of this Rocky Mountain school district. Over these past four years it has become increasingly clear that the public education system is burdened by a culture that inhibits its growth and evolution. That realization was depressing.

The encouragement and optimism came from meeting numerous people seeking alternatives or building truly systemic reforms within their schools. Your journal has helped me to see the breadth of the realization and that there has been long term creative interests in alternatives.

I am now pursuing a masters' in education of my own design to be able to lead further change efforts in schooling. I really look forward to the future's surprises and to the additional information your journal will provide.

All the best, and I shall hope to see the Free School soon.

Sincerely,
Tristam
Tristam B. Johnson Jr.

December 27, 1992

Dear Mary,

Here is our renewal for *ΣΚΟΛΕ*. Sorry it is so late and that we were unresponsive to your earlier requests. The truth is that we often *are* too busy to read *ΣΚΟΛΕ* as fully as we would like, but we are still ardent supporters of alternative education and of the work that you are doing.

I was recently cleaning up (out ?) my office and came upon the issue in which you and Chris Mercogliano responded to my letter to Chris concerning the article he wrote about his experience with the math class. (We're talking a few years back.) Sad to say but I left active teaching soon thereafter (no relationship between the two events) so I haven't had the energy or desire to continue the dialogue. Presently I do organization development consulting and training, particularly centering around cultural diversity and gender equity, including some work with educational organizations, so I try to keep my hand in the education field whenever possible. I also do a fair amount of training and consulting in the field of personal computing.

Suffice it to say that I would love to visit The Free School if and when I get up to the Albany area. I didn't mean to sound dogmatic concerning democracy in schools, but I do feel strongly that if kids' choice is a privilege bestowed by adults, rather than a right bestowed by their humanity, then it is a false and hollow privilege - one that is too easily revoked by the whims of the adults around them, no matter how caring they are. I agree with most of Chris' letter, particularly when he talks about the relationship between the people involved being the heart of teaching (and parenting, I would add).

Go well! I hope you have been having a great holiday season and that our paths cross sometime. (Unless you're planning on following up on your "threat" to put up your dukes!)

Sincerely,
Alan
Alan A. Klein
Klein Consulting
Training and Consulting in
Diversity, Equity and Educational Issues
4730 Sheppard Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042

OK, Alan, I promise not to deck you! Come visit. Chris says hi and come too.

Love,
Mary

(UNPAID-FOR) ADVERTISEMENTS:

Alternatives In Education

This new book from Home Education Press provides an excellent starting point for finding what really works in education. *Alternatives In Education* brings together all of the options available outside the public, church, and traditional private school systems. Drawing from several different fields of alternative education, this book details the how and the why of getting involved with homeschooling, alternative and community schools, Waldorf Education, Montessori Schooling, alternative methods of higher education, and provides information and examples of how alternatively educated students can enter the college of their choice without traditional diplomas and transcripts.

Contributors to this book include some of the best known individuals in the field of alternative education, including John Taylor Gatto, 3-time New York City Teacher of the Year, and 1991 Teacher of the Year; Daniel Greenberg, founder of the famed Sudbury Valley School in Framingham, Massachusetts; Dr. Ron Miller, founder and publisher of *Holistic Education Review;* Patrick Farenga, President of Holt Associates in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Dr. Pat Montgomery, founder and director of Clonlara School in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Larry and Susan Kaseman, authors of *Taking Charge Through Homeschooling;* Katharine Houk and Seth Rockmuller of The Alliance for Parental Involvement in Education, Jerry Mintz of The Alternative Education Resource Organization, and many, many others.

Extensive resource listings and recommended reading after each chapter provide further information on options in education. The book is completely indexed and biographical information about each contributor is included in the appendix section.

In his Introduction to this book, Earl Stevens writes, "Perhaps more than at any other time since the beginning of public education in this country, parents and children are aware that they have the power and the responsibility to take charge of their education and their daily lives. Here, in this book, is both information and inspiration for those who are ready to act on that awareness."

ALTERNATIVES IN EDUCATION

is a complete guide to the options available outside of the public, church, and traditional private school system. Chapters include:

OK, Alan, I promise not to deck you! Come visit. Chris says hi and come too.

Love,
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ALTERNATIVES IN EDUCATION

is a complete guide to the options available outside of the public, church, and traditional private school system. Chapters include:

1. Alternative Education

An exploration of alternative education, with articles by Mark and Helen Hegener, publishers of *Home Education Magazine;* Ron Miller, author of *What are Schools For?* and founder and former editor of *Holistic Education Review;* Jerry Mintz, founder of The Alternative Education Resource Organization; and Jane Williams, of Bluestocking Press/Educational Options.

2. The Politics of Education

An in-depth examination of the forces affecting and controlling American education today, with articles by Larry and Susan Kaseman, authors of *Taking Charge Through Homeschooling: Personal and Political Empowerment;* and including interviews with John Taylor Gatto, three times New York City Teacher of the Year, 1991 New York State Teacher of the Year, and author of the book *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Schools;* and with Seth Rockmuller and Katharine Houk, Executive Directors of The Alliance for Parental Involvement for Education.

3. Alternative Educators

Biographical skteches including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Pestalozzi, Francis W. Parker, Amos Bronson Alcott, Jean Piaget, John Dewey, Ivan Illich, Jonathan Kozol, and Herbert Kohl (in separate chapters: John Holt, A.S. Neill, Maria Montessori, and Rudolf Steiner).

4. Homeschooling

The fastest-growing educational option in the U.S., homeschooling is explored and explained, including answers to such questions as socialization, testing and accountability, legal concerns, legislation, selecting curriculum, higher education, support groups, and resources.

5. Alternative Schools

This chapter explains alternative community schooling, and presents an indepth article on The National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools, including profiles of several member schools. Also featuring articles on A. S. Neill's controversial Summerhill School in Leiston, England; Clonlara School, a major correspondence school in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Daniel Greenberg's Sudbury Valley School in Framingham, Massachusetts; and many others.

6. Waldorf Education and Montessori Schools

An exploration of these popular private school programs, with biographical histories of founders Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner;

in-depth articles by well-known experts in both fields; and an examination of the philosophies on which these methods are based.

7. High School and Higher Education
How children who have been educated in an alternative setting can successfully make the transition to the world of higher education, college, or work. Articles by Patrick Farenga, President of Holt Associates; Britt Barker, author of *Letters Home;* Donn Reed, author of *The Home School Source Book;* Bobbie Groth, former Admissions Director, Shimer College, and many others.

Alternatives In Education, edited by Mark and Helen Hegener, published in October, 1992 by Home Education Press, 288 pages, completely indexed, extensive resource listings, appendixes, format 6" x 9", ISBN 0-945097-15-8, retail price $16.75 (plus $2.00 shipping), from Home Education Press, P. O. Box 1983, Tonasket, WA 98855; (509) 486-1351

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OPTIONS IN LEARNING
NEWSLETTERS, MAGAZINES, AND PUBLICATIONS

E/The Environmental Magazine is an independent nonprofit environmental magazine, a "clearinghouse" of information, news and commentary on environmental issues with a what you can do emphasis. Edited for the general reader, but in sufficient depth to appeal to the dedicated environmentalist. Printed in beautiful full color on recycled paper. *E* is published bimonthly. Subscriptions are $20/year. *E Magazine*, PO Box 6667, Syracuse, NY 13217; 800-825-0061.

Fostering Home-School Cooperation: Involving Language Minority Families as Partners in Education is a twenty-three page booklet published by the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.The booklet includes concrete ideas for ways in which schools can help parents to participate, from volunteering to participating in governance. To order, send $2.50 to Nat'l Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 118 22nd Street NW, Washington, DC 20037 and request booklet #GWP-6, Fostering Home-School Cooperation.

Rethinking Schools: An Activist Educational Journal, has recently published a special issue entitled *False Choices: Why School Vouchers Threaten Our Children's Future.* From the press release: "School choice has become the most emotionally charged debate in education today....False Choices cuts through the political rhetoric and marketing hype surrounding this controversy to present a powerful case against voucher systems and privatization." Single copies: $3 plus $2 postage from *Rethinking Schools*, 1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212.

Hopscotch: The Magazine for Girls is a bi-monthly publication which was created by a librarian to fill a void she saw in magazines available to youth. *Hopscotch* accepts no advertising, has a format and size reminiscent of *Cricket* magazine, and "insists on treating its six to twelve year-old readers as youngsters and not adults." My ten year-old daughter read the sample issue and is anxious to subscribe to it. $15 per year for six issues For information: *Hopscotch*, PO Box 164, Bluffton, OH 45817-0164.

Full-Time Dads, the network and newsletter for fathers who are primary caregivers, has a new address and editor: contact Stephen Harris, *Full-Time Dads*, PO Box 577, Cumberland, ME 04021.

ΣΚΟΛΕ, The Journal of Alternative Education is edited by Mary Leue, who spoke on alternative schools at AllPIE's annual conference, and whose book, *Challenging the Giant: The Best of ΣΚΟΛΕ*, is offered in AllPIE's Book and Resources catalog ($12.95 plus $2 shipping from AllPIE). To give you an idea of the sorts of articles in SKOLE, here is a sampling from the Winter 1992 issue: Profiles of Schools: The Experience of Summerhill (Albert Lamb), The Emergence of Arthur Morgan School (Ernest Morgan), The Free School and The Planet School (Keikosan Yamashita), How to Get an Education at Home (Pat Farenga), Designing Alternatives for Success (Hofstra University Center for the Study of Educational Alternatives), The Role of Play at Sudbury Valley School (Daniel Greenberg), book reviews, poetry, letters, a special section on John Taylor Gatto, and much more. Two issues a year, $20 from Down-To-Earth Books, 72 Philip Street, Albany, NY 12202.

Free The Kids! is a networking and informational newsletter for people concerned about preventing violence toward children. For information, send $2 to *Free The Kids!*, PO Box 942, Rochester, VT 05167-0942.

Learning and Teaching is the theme of the September 1992 issue of *Peacework, a New England Peace and Social Justice Newsletter* published by the American Friends Service Committee. Aaron Falbel, who was a speaker at AllPIE's August conference at Colgate University, has in that issue an article entitled "Education As Violence," and there are eight other articles, as well, that would be of interest to AllPIE's readers. For your copy of *Peacework*— "Learning and Teaching" issue send $1 to American Friends Service Committee, 2161 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140.

"Real Choice in Education," a Special Report from *The Threefold Review*, is a report on a conference of that name which includes the presentations by the speakers at that conference: John Taylor Gatto, Stephen Arons, Gary Lamb, and Timothy Ehrgott. To obtain a copy of the special report ($1.50) or for information about *The Threefold Review*, a magazine based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner, write to *The Threefold Review*, PO Box 6, Philmont, NY 12565.

Two new publications for Christian homeschooling families: *Homeschooling Today: Practical Help for Christian Families*, $15/year (6 issues) from *Homeschooling Today*, PO Box 1425, Melrose, FL, 32666-9988. *Home School Advantage: A Teaching Aid for Christian Home Schoolers*, $17/year (4 issues) from *Home School Advantage*, PO Box 8190, Phoenix, AZ 85066-8190.

The Drinking Gourd is a new publication for homeschoolers of color. In the first issue, editor Donna Nichols White writes: "This is the beginning of what I hope will be an exciting adventure, and lasting friendship....I am an African American woman. I have been home with my family for seven years. I have read countless books on the subject of home education. I have also attended many workshops and conventions. I have found many supportive homeschooling families and have established relationships that I will always cherish, but I have not felt complete. "What has been missing from my experience is the expertise and experience of other families. Our reasons for publishing *The Drinking Gourd* include making these kinds of contacts..."

From ALLPIE (Katharine Houk's and Seth Rockmuller's
Alliance for Parental Involvement in Education), P.O. Box 59,
East Chatham, NY 12060-0059.

* * * * * * *

***DUMBING US DOWN* - *The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*, by John Taylor Gatto, pb $15, New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA 19143.**

A collection of keynote speeches on schooling Mr. Gatto has given in 21 states as New York State Teacher of the Year, 1991.

An autographed copy is available directly from the author. Send $15 to: John Taylor Gatto, 235 W.76th St. NYC,NY 10023.

HELP WANTED:

Can you help us get a grassroots campaign for school reform started by volunteering some time or sending a donation to help publicize the book and pay for the costs of Carnegie Hall?

Mail offers of assistance to: John Taylor Gatto, 235 West 76th Street, New York City 10023, or call 529-9327.

"The Exhausted School" is the first in a series of public information meetings about schools and education. We hope to open state monopoly schooling and state monopoly teacher certification to free market choices.

* * * * * * *

INSPIRING READING FOR TODAY'S EDUCATOR

What Are Schools For? Holistic Education in American Culture

by Ron Miller, Ph.D.

This is the definitive history of holistic education and its pioneers over two centuries. Ron Miller editor of *Holistic Education Review*,, provides a thorough overview of the various educational movements founded on person-centered, progressive, global, and spiritual principles. Using a broad American Studies perspective, Miller explores the cultural worldview underlying mainstream American education and carefully describes, point by point, how holistic approaches offer a radical alternative. *What Are Schools For?* is a stirring call for a revolution in American education.

What Are Schools For?
ISBN 0-9627232-0-7
175 pp; $18.95 (quality paperback)
New Directions in Education:
Selections from *Holistic Education Review*
ISBN 0-9627232-1-5
362 pp.; $24.95 (quality paperback)

Have you missed the early issues of *Holistic Education Review*, "the number one journal in education today"? Here, in one volume, are thirty-three of the most stimulating and critical articles from the first ten issues of the *Review*—most of which are now out of print. The selections are thoughtfully grouped into five themes, covering the theory and practice of holistic education in all its diversity, and demonstrating its relevance to contemporary educational problems. This is a comprehensive reference book covering the scope of holistic education, an excellent textbook for courses in educational foundations, and delightful reading that will inspire teachers at all grade levels.

From: HOLISTIC EDUCATION PRESS
Confronting the Challenges of the 1990s
39 Pearl Street, Brandon, VT 05733-100
(802) 247-8312

* * * * * * *

FROM CONCENTRIC MEDIA:

"WHY DO THESE KIDS LOVE SCHOOL?"

A BRILLIANT VIDEO by independent film-maker Dorothy Fadiman in conjunction with KTEH-TV, San Francisco

Five years in the making, the film covers visits to several alternative schools starting with an in-depth look at Peninsula School, Menlo Park, California, then moving on to six other schools across the country. The overview of alternative schooling is stunning in its effect, reflecting the meticulousness of Mrs.. Fadiman's understanding of her subject as well as her total love of what she is filming.

If you have a need to explain to anyone what it is about alternative education that is so magnificent, show her/him this film!

You can obtain a copy by writing (or call (415) 321- 5590):
Concentric Media, 1070 Colby Ave. ,Menlo Park, CA
94025

The Abortion Dilemma

Film Explores Many Facets of Abortion Issue

by Beret E. Strong

"When you have a choice, you are able to reflect thoughtfully on the question of what you actually want." This is how Dorothy Fadiman, producer and director of the forthcoming three-part documentary film *The Abortion Dilemma*, views the moral dimensions of reproductive choice. If safe, affordable abortions are unavailable, women will not be able to choose consciously whether or not to bear a child. Creating the space for viewers to reach their own conclusions is an essential part of Fadiman's filmmaking process.

Part One of *The Abortion Dilemma*, "The Human Costs of Illegal Abortion," is slated for PBS broadcast in the San Francisco Bay Area early this summer. "In this film I chose to interview women who represent a wide spectrum of those women who suffered illegal abortions," says Fadiman. "One woman is 86 and had her abortion in the 1920s. Another tells of her sister who died from a self-induced illegal abortion. A third was so traumatized by a previous illegal abortion that she chose, after being raped, to bear that baby and give it up for adoption. Ironically, she found bearing the baby even more traumatic than the abortion."

Fadiman understands what these women went through. In 1962, she had an abortion under conditions typical at that time. She was blindfolded and taken to a motel where she was given an abortion with no anesthetic by a person she never saw. Within 48 hours, she was in the intensive care unit of Stanford Hospital.

"At first I was only interested in the human costs of illegal abortion. As the film evolved, it became clear that other aspects—such as how abortions laws affect society and the history of the issue—were integral to the question." Part Two, "The Impact of Abortion Laws on Society," addresses such issues as adoption, unwanted children, and how abortion relates to the poverty cycle for women. Part Three, "A Range of Voices," explores the ambivalence felt by so many people about the abortion issue.

"Every documentary filmmaker's greatest challenge is to raise enough money to complete and distribute a film of television broadcast quality," Fadiman says. In the case of *The Abortion Dilemma*, Fadiman calls people's willingness to contribute "phenomenal." So far she has raised over $60,000 from individuals and three small foundations towards her financial goal of S150,000. Her funding needs have been met mostly through small donations from a grassroots community response.

Because *Roe v. Wade* is in danger of being overturned this summer, Fadiman is racing against the clock to raise money and complete shooting and editing Part One in time for the summer release date. She is negotiating other television possibilities, including a national PBS broadcast, and plans a community outreach campaign to reach as many women's health and family social service organizations throughout the nation as her funding permits.

"The strongest way to reach people is through other people's candid sharing," says Fadiman. "Documentary film is a vehicle through which an individual's personal experience can be transformed into universal experience." She wants the viewing experience to be one of recognition, where the viewer's inner knowing is ignited. "When the film was only about illegal abortion, it had a heart-wrenching emotional core which moved people deeply," she says. "The film is now less raw, but the tradeoff is in a greater sense of what one can do."

The Abortion Dilemma grew organically from Fadiman's last film, *Why Do These Kids Love School?*, which emphasizes giving children choices about how and what they learn. "Seeing the impact of *Why Do These Kids Love School?* on traditional education, I realized the power of showing, rather than telling. Instead of criticizing traditional education, my film says 'Let's look at what works. The film is spreading like wildfire across the established education community." She decided to approach the issue of abortion by revealing—not arguing—the importance of having choice remain an option for women.

As Fadiman's work has evolved, she has learned to trust the experience of her interviewees and let the film arise organically from their stories. In *The Abortion Dilemma*, this process has brought her back again and again to the issue of choice. "I want a documentary to choose the shape it needs to take, rather than to mold it to my intention."

While editing a film, she relies heavily on feedback: first from trusted friends, then from potential viewers in the local community, and finally from outsiders. Her production company is called Concentric Media, reflecting this process of opening to ever-expanding circles of influence.

"Each person I talk to brings new insight into the conversation," she says. "I rely on other people's gut level reactions. The process is a dialogue between my best effort and the reactions of potential viewers. I hope that as a result of this interplay, *The Abortion Dilemma* will reflect the ethical integrity of supporting choice as an option."

Reprinted from the Association for Humanistic Psychology Newsletter *for June, 1992.* ***Beret B. Strong*** *is a professor of literature and writer who cares about humane birth and humane death. She worked with Dorothy Fadiman on* The Abortion Dilemma, *and is a volunteer in a hospice/AIDS facility in San Francisco.* ***Dorothy Fadiman*** *can be reached at (415) 321-5590 / fax (415) 321-5633.*

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO THE FIRST BROADCAST OF *WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL: Untold Stories*

• According to the Nielsen report, *WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL:* was the third best-watched single program KTEH has ever produced.

• Following the broadcast, the station received more than 150 phone calls and dozens of letters of appreciation. Only five of these nearly two hundred responses criticized the station for having chosen this topic.

• People from both Pro-Choice and Pro-Life positions called to express their views; the program was appreciated by people from both perspectives for its non-exploitive treatment of a subject which can so easily be sensa-tionalized.

Excerpts from letters received in response to the KTEH-TV San Francisco Bay Area Broadcast of ***WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL - Untold Stories***

"I kept thinking while watching this documentary how personal and real it was, honest and clear, sympathetic and helpful, "political" in the best sense of the word. This is about people who've taken action on their conviction in such a compelling way, who communicate human need and urgency through their actions. It is easy to become jaded and bored or complacent and self-satisfied. It's much more difficult to remain so when shown another way of being in the world."

"***WHEN ABORTION WAS ILLEGAL*** injects a historical perspective into what has become an hysterical issue. I want to congratulate KTEH for having aired this impressive documen-tary."

"...While this film is about abortion, it represents the tip of the iceberg of many greater issues. This program addresses liberty and freedom, through understanding, compassion and wisdom."

"*UNTOLD STORIES* tells a story which I do not know. At age 29, all my experience has been while abortion was legal. I am at a time in my life when I've chosen to evaluate my priorities. This important piece of history has been been absent from my intellectual analysis of the abortion issue. *UNTOLD STORIES* provided both insight and inspiration. Thank you."

"...painfully wonderful. Seeing the courage of the people interviewed in this documentary gave me courage."

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT GETTING A VIDEOTAPE OF THIS DOCUMENTARY - WRITE TO:
CONCENTRIC MEDIA
1070 Colby Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025
FAX 415-321-5633

* * * * * * *

PARENTAL CHOICE IN EDUCATION: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

(A Simple Primer)

Carlos A. Bonilla, Ph.D., CPC
ICA, Inc.
Stockton, California

To order copies of this publication (42 pages)
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Would you like to know a quick way to ruin a party? A simple method to cause a gathering to disband? An easy means to cause otherwise placid, well-mannered folk to insult one another and come to near blows? Mention the word "CHOICE" or advance the subject of school reform for discussion and that will certainly do it! And why should this be so, you may ask? Because the concept of reform or parental choice in education is one of the most volatile issues in the '90s, one which should be well understood before any of us reacts in a negative or positive manner.

Judging from the headlines, no mild reactions to the choice/reform idea can be found; that is, one is either fervently opposed or strongly in favor of the concept and nothing in between. In this and the following pages, we'll decipher TOGETHER what "The Experts" have to say, the pro and con, so that we, ourselves, may become informed consumers, thus facilitating effective, non-violent dialogue about school reform and parental choice. My intention is to present the facts and act as an impartial referee; you, on the other hand, are left with the task of deciding where you'll stand on this crucial issue for the '90s.

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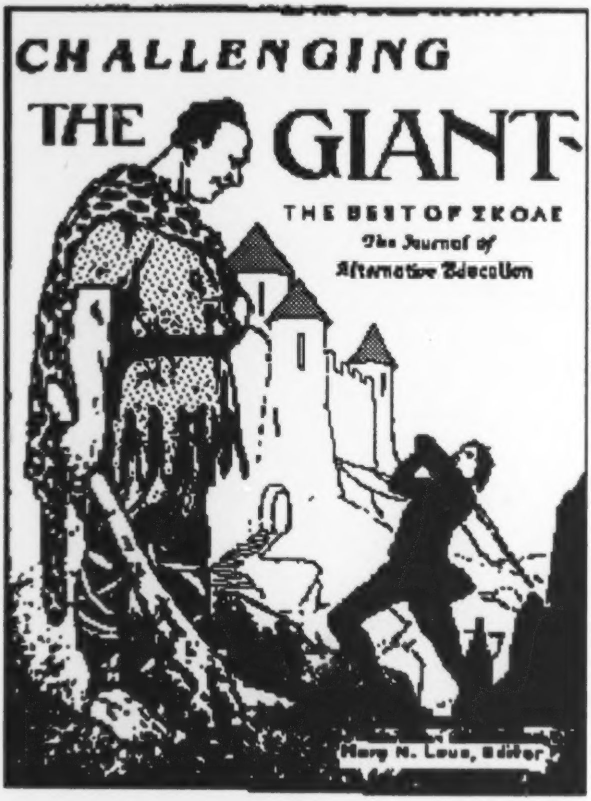
FROM DOWN-TO-EARTH BOOKS:


CHALLENGING
THE GIANT
THE BEST OF ΣΚΟΛΕ
The Journal of
Alternative Education
Mary M. Leue, editor

"Mary is one of the most brilliant educators in the country who has kept alive the progressive tradition all through the Reagan and Bush years. She is one of the strongest voices for children in this country."

-Jonathan Kozol, author, advocate of alternative education

Responding to the distress of her ten-year-old son, Mary Leue decided to start The Free School, which is now one of the longest running inner city independent alternative schools in the nation. Influenced by the father of anarchism Prince Pyotr Kropotkin, by Mahatma Gandhi, and by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., she firmly believes that open democratic education should be available to the children of the poor as well as those of the middle and upper classes.

Mary Leue created **ΣKOAE** seven years ago in that same spirit. *Challenging the Giant* is a collection of exciting and thought-provoking articles from this Journal, presenting a broad spectrum of perspectives on this phenomenon that has been called "alternative.". Such offerings *include:*

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Why ΣKOAE? Choice of the Name in Terms of the History of Alternative Schooling

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Subleties of a Democratic School - Sudbury Valley School, by Dan Greenberg

Metropolitan School of Columbus: A Twenty Year Perspective on Alternative Schools, from One Person's Experience, by Lucia Vorys

The History of the Free School, by Mary Leue

L'Ecole d'Humanité; Learning Without Fear, by Ernst Scagnet

Central Park East: an Alternative Story, by Deborah Meier

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Homeschooling and John Holt's Vision, by Pat Farenga

Robots Building Robots by Mary Leue

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Haikus: Fanon Frazier, David Daniels, Libby Carivan

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Child's Work, by Nancy Wallace

You may order *Challenging the Giant, the best of ΣΚΟΛΕ, the Journal of Alternative Education*
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Tel. (518) 432-1578; FAX: 432-8984

New from Down-to-Earth Books:

Looking for One's Shadow at Noon,

By Mary M. Leue

vol. I: *Looking for the Self in Family and Society*

This is a collection of introspective pieces, autobio-graphical in tone, through which the author reflects upon various dimensions of experience along the perilous path to personal growth and enlightenment. Essays include:

Spade is a Five-Letter Word
Giants in the Earth
An Unnatural Act
Tricksters Anonymous
Labyrinth
The Teaching of the Shields
The Web of Being

Tricksters Anonymous

vol.II: *Finding the Self in School and Community*

In this volume, the author deepens her explorations to include commentaries about the nature of life in school and community. She draws on her extensive experience, both with Reichian body psychotherapy and the school/community she helped to found and teach in starting in 1969 and continuing up to the present. Essays, some of which first appeared in the English Reichian Journal *Energy and Character*, include:

A Tribute to Fritz Perls
A Social and Political Reassessment of the Work of
Wilhelm Reich
Reality and the Rose Curtain: Owning your Anger
The Free School Controversy: A Letter from America
Shoestring School
The History of the Free School
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For Families and Educators
"Joy Is an Inside Job"

EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMER, 1993 ISSUE:

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EARTH IS SPELLED FROM HEART . . .
THE POSSIBILITY OF PEACE ON THE ONE, CAN ONLY OCCUR WITH THE ACTUALITY OF LOVE IN THE OTHER.

Our greatest challenge is to bring about a new generation of human beings; which have the clarity and creative capacity to solve the monumental problems we have created. This clarity implies seeing through the images and beliefs which have divided human beings for centuries. Every child comes into the world with the same intelligence as you or I. It is there, full and active. They don't need to learn to be intelligent. They are intelligence.

Then what takes place? We demand that they take this vast, infinite capacity to learn and narrow it down into a fixed image which then limits all future learning. The smaller, the more rigid the image, the more selfish and violent they become. The bigger and more flexible the image, the more affectionate their response to each other and to the environment. Only by discovering and understanding the full creative power of imagination can we get behind the narrow, fixed images we have created about ourselves and for our children.

"Discovering Imagination,"
(the last of 3 essays)
Michael Mendizza:
DISCOVERING IMAGINATION,
3 audio tapes, $25.95, 10.95 ea. from JC

Most of us have been led to believe that joy is an effect. It is something that happens to us if we are at the right place at the right time. If conditions are right then there is something to feel good about. I submit to you you that joy is not any effect but joy is a cause. Joy is something that exists in us. True joy cannot be experienced without commitment to something more important than our own selfish desires....

We have to be doing something for people we love, for fellow human beings, for work to which we are committed, for some moral or religious ideal or for the creation of something that will have lasting value. So many times we we sit waiting for someone to come and save us and make us happy. Happiness can never be found that way....We develop anger attacks, fear attacks, anxiety attacks;.and ultimately heart attacks, but no one ever told us how important it was to create in ourselves A JOY ATTACK! Never in life has someone come to me and said, "I am joyful."....

We have a race of people in America that are addicted to drugs that they think will help them to escape their gloom and doom I have never yet seen a tranquil person on drugs. I don't care if a doctor did prescribe them. Nothing can ever substitute for our real nature. You can't get it out of a bottle, from a prescription or pill nor can you find it in another situation.... Some mighty things will happen when you are willing to assume responsibility for your attitudes and no longer blame how you think and feel on the circumstances around you.

The great secret is this: if you are practicing joy, you are practicing God. [Marge Thornton notes from talk by Jack Boland]

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